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President: Mr. Essy . . . . . (Côte d'Ivoire)

The meeting was called to order at 10.30 a.m.

Agenda item 154

United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s: draft resolution (A/49/L.44)

The President (*interpretation from French*): Members will recall that by decision 48/504 of 19 September 1994 the General Assembly decided to include the item entitled "United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s" in the agenda of the forty-ninth session so that the consultations envisaged in resolution 48/214 of 23 December 1993 could be held at an appropriate time during the forty-ninth session. By that resolution, intensive consultations were to be convened by the Assembly on the full range of issues related to the diversification of African economies.

I call first on the representative of Tunisia to make a statement, in the course of which he will introduce draft resolution A/49/L.44.

Mr. Abdellah (Tunisia) (*interpretation from French*): My delegation, speaking on behalf of the current Chairman of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), wishes to make some comments on the agenda item entitled "United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s".

I want to begin by welcoming the international community's interest in the development and growth of Africa. The United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s has come to manifest concretely the Organization's commitment to the economic emancipation of the continent. The Agenda marks the renewed commitment of the United Nations to support Africa's own development efforts. For all African States, this is an act of faith and a sign of hope which, in spite of the precarious international situation and the difficulties of the moment, bolsters their struggle for development. This support is all the more notable because, in vast areas of our continent, the African economic and social crisis of the 1980s and the 1990s has yet to end. Combined with prolonged drought, this situation could only lead to social upheaval, damaging the precarious stability of countries, which in many cases had become extremely fragile.

That is the hostile context in which African countries have had to adopt policies to reverse the negative trend and bring order to their devastated economies. With that purpose, stabilization and structural-adjustment programmes sponsored by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank have been put in place by nearly all African countries. But in many cases the reform and structural-adjustment programmes engaged in by African countries have not yet yielded the expected results.

According to the report of the Secretary-General, since 1980 Africa has experienced continued stagnation, even in some cases decline; some countries that at the beginning of the decade were among the middle-income

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group now belong to the group of least-developed countries.

The same can be said of the continent's external trade. Africa's share of world exports has continued to fall, from 4 per cent in the 1970s to 1.4 per cent in 1990. African countries have lost their share of international export markets to other regions, even with respect to raw materials, where the continent had enjoyed a comparative advantage for decades. The increased cost of imports and the decline in export income are major obstacles, preventing most African countries from equalizing their balance of payments.

At the same time, official development assistance has declined in real terms since 1990. Africa has also been passed over by the recent wave of private investment in developing countries.

Our countries know that economic cooperation and integration are the most reliable way to achieve balanced economic growth and sustainable development in Africa; during this decade we shall be working in that direction, both on the subregional level and continent-wide.

Regional groupings now cover all the subregions of the continent; this is an important development that could have a positive impact on prospects for development in general, and hence in the area of industrialization, the development of services and the growth of trade. The growing role of regional integration is reflected in the signing, on 3 June 1991, at Abuja, Nigeria, of the treaty establishing the African Economic Community. The broadening of the preferential trade zone for the States of eastern and southern Africa, the establishment of the Southern African Development Community and the consolidation of the Arab Maghreb Union should contribute, at the subregional level, to this trend. In southern Africa, more specifically, the integration of the Republic of South Africa as an important partner of the international community represents a hopeful potential, with new resources and promising prospects for growth in the region and its economic take-off and social well-being.

Africa's determination to go forward and to mobilize its energies in the work of integrated development was recently reaffirmed by the Heads of State of Africa, during their thirtieth summit, held in June 1994 in Tunis.

Speaking at the closure of that meeting, Mr. Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, the President of the Republic of Tunisia and current Chairman of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), stated:

> "Today it has become obvious in the light of the profound changes occurring in the contemporary world that the polarization of our efforts in the work of development is the only means by which we will be able to meet the new challenges of the coming century."

Thus, the thirtieth summit paid particular attention to the continent's development problems. It is significant that at this meeting all the Heads of State of Africa evidenced their interest in the implementation of the Abuja agreements, which led to the establishment of the African Economic Community. In this context, the African leaders stressed the need to undertake coordinated collective action to adapt the economies of their respective countries to the requirements of the new world market which will come into being with the World Trade Organization (WTO).

Calling for the rational, judicious and far-sighted exploitation of Africa's immense human and material potential, the Tunis summit called upon the international community to treat Africa as a partner.

However, we are bound to note that the partnership to which Africa aspires is slow in taking shape. In fact, direct foreign investment in Africa is very low and is not increasing. The investment flow has been only about $2 billion for all of Africa in 1992, which is less than 2 per cent of all direct foreign investment in developing countries. The main interest of foreign investors in Africa is still its natural resources.

Africa is the only region in the world where the development of public investment exceeds private investment. To reverse this trend, many African countries have started a process of accelerated liberalization, hoping thereby to improve the effectiveness of their enterprises.

Dependence on raw materials, the low level of per capita income and the weakness, even absence, of inter-industrial links: these have, none the less, been negative elements acting as a brake on Africa's development and growth.

This explains the breadth of the problem and the complexity of the obstacles to be overcome by the continent in building the bases for its infrastructure, since

socio-economic development is obviously an integrated process and the result of vast, high-profile operations carried out in many sectors, including industry, agriculture, training and basic services.

The development and promotion of basic industries, which are essential for the sustainable development of the region and the promotion of small industries to create employment in the States of the region, as well as the promotion of industries that produce consumer goods, are also at the core of the action undertaken by the African States with the support of the international community and the United Nations system of organizations.

We must however recognize that the action now being taken both by the United Nations system and the international community in general is far from sufficient to solve the problems Africa is facing. To overcome the crisis that Africa is undergoing requires far more resolve and the dedication of far more resources, both at the national and the international levels.

Thus, we would like to express our concern at the decline in official development assistance. We believe that urgent measures should be taken to increase the flows of capital to African countries. These measures should go hand in hand with the reduction of the burden of the African countries' external debt. A greater mobilization of resources should thus enable the African countries to proceed from the stage of adjustment to that of development.

African countries should also be able to rely on international assistance in order to take full advantage of the opportunities opened up by the Uruguay Round trade talks and to reduce as far as possible the negative effects that may arise therefrom on a short-term basis.

Finally, it is the international community's duty to support the efforts being made by Africa to diversify its economy and thus enable its peoples to be no longer dependent on the export of one or two commodities, whose prices fluctuate at the will of the market.

In this respect, I should like to cite the following passage from the Declaration of the African Ministers of Foreign Affairs of 29 September 1994:

> "We invite all the parties to the negotiation of the draft resolution establishing a diversification fund for Africa's commodities to demonstrate flexibility so that the resolution may be adopted in the course of this forty-ninth session of the General Assembly." *(A/49/479, para. 4)*.

The need to diversify the African commodity sector has been reaffirmed in all the Secretary-General's reports dealing with the question. Dependent on a small number of commodities for its income, Africa owes it to itself to diversify its production and its exports to permit the economies of the African States to absorb without great damage the impact of price fluctuations in exported goods and of the terms of trade.

It is in this context that we must consider the Secretary-General's proposal for the establishment of a diversification fund for Africa's commodities, including the agriculture and fisheries sectors. Such a fund would promote both horizontal and vertical diversification, and it could be managed by the most appropriate African institution, namely, the African Development Bank.

From this point of view, we appreciate the interest shown by our developed partners in the continent's well-being and prosperity. Relying on international solidarity, so that Africa may once again find the road to growth, we appeal to the international community to give effect to its statements of interest in and support for Africa's development efforts by contributing to the establishment of a diversification fund that could begin to operate in the coming months.

The draft resolution submitted on this subject (A/49/L.44) is directed to that end, and we invite participating States to reconstitute the diversification fund within the African Development Bank in order to create a window within the replenished Technical Assistance Fund with new and additional resources of $50 to $75 million over a period of two to three years to finance the preparatory phase of commodity diversification projects and programmes by African countries.

This draft resolution is now the subject of intensive informal consultations among all the parties concerned. It is our hope that our developed partners will show proof of the understanding and flexibility that are needed if progress is to be made in the negotiations on this text so that it can be adopted in the next few days, before the suspension of this General Assembly session.

Mr. Lamamra (Algeria) (*interpretation from French*): My statement, on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, on this important agenda item is an expression of the widest solidarity of our Group with the African

countries, which make up an essential part of its composition. Beyond this natural duty and this need for solidarity on behalf of the delegations of developing countries, my contribution to this debate concerns the commitments that the international community has made to the African continent, which continues to remain on the sidelines of progress.

Indeed, the designation of the question of the economic recovery and development of Africa as one of the five overall priorities spelt out by the United Nations medium-term plan and the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa took place in the wake of a decade — the 1980s — that was justly considered as lost in terms of development, for the African continent in particular. This failure was illustrated by the negative outcome of the implementation of the earlier United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development. The New Agenda became, at that juncture, a new starting-point for international cooperation for the development of Africa, specifying in a clear and realistic way the responsibilities and respective undertakings of the African countries themselves and those of the international community, this within the framework of a world partnership to ensure the resumption of the economic growth and development of Africa, with a view to its full integration into the world economy.

Among the priority objectives of the New Agenda is the transformation of African economies through their integration and diversification, on the national and regional levels, in order to consolidate them and reduce their vulnerability to the external shocks resulting from the increasing globalization of international economic relations. Particular stress was thus placed on the implementation of a development process that would be autonomous and specific to Africa. An annual growth rate of 6 per cent until the year 2000, though only a rough goal, was considered one of the requirements for the sustained and lasting growth and equitable development of the African continent and for its effective struggle against poverty.

The United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa clearly defined the responsibilities of the African countries and the international community. The African countries were exhorted, on the economic level, to improve their economies through better management and a structural reform of their productive capacity in order to promote regional and subregional cooperation and economic integration. They were also urged to create a favourable climate for attracting direct investments — local and foreign — and to maximize the use of their human resources, particularly in the fields of science and technology. Finally, on the political level, they were asked to continue the democratization of the development process to allow their populations to play a greater part in the management of their countries' public affairs.

The international community, for its part, undertook to support the efforts of the African countries to accelerate the growth of their economies and to ensure their development through actions taken on several levels.

First, on the financial level, support is to be given through a substantial increase in official development assistance, estimated by the Secretary-General of the United Nations at $30 billion a year beginning in 1992, and also through the implementation of innovative and bold measures to solve the problem of the debt, the servicing of which weighs heavily on the budgets of all African countries.

Then, on the commercial level, the main developed partners of Africa have undertaken to support the efforts of the African countries to diversify their economies and to increase their export income. In that context, great urgency was attached to resolving the question of commodity goods through better remuneration and better access to markets. It was also recognized that additional resources should be available to sustain the programmes of diversification, both horizontal and vertical, in order to reduce the dependency of African economies on primary commodities.

Finally, the United Nations system itself was invited to make its contribution to the implementation of this Programme of Action. Its various bodies and specialized agencies were to establish, in their respective fields, programmes for Africa and to devote adequate resources for their implementation. Since the Economic Commission for Africa was called on to play a greater role in energizing and coordinating these programmes, a strengthening of its human and material resources was clearly in order.

All observers agree on the scope of the efforts made by the African countries to assume their responsibilities within the framework of the New Agenda. Most, if not all, of them have undertaken massive structural adjustment programmes and have embarked upon political reforms.

At the regional level, they have striven to promote regional economic cooperation and integration. The

Treaty establishing the African Economic Community, signed at Abuja in 1991, bears witness to the will of the African countries collectively to take in hand their own destiny through the use of their own capabilities.

This measure on the continental level expands upon the activities already undertaken at the subregional level, where existing integration mechanisms have been strengthened with a view to better coordinating and adapting them to the new objectives set before them as pillars of the pan-African economic community.

Praiseworthy as they may be, the individual and collective efforts of the African countries will not suffice to solve the continent's multidimensional crisis. Because of the scarce means at the disposal of these countries, it would be useless to expect significant results if the international community does not assume its responsibility to supply adequate financial resources and establish a favourable external environment.

Africa is a rich continent, but one that has not to date been sufficiently helped to achieve its potential. In addition to its human resources — young and industrious populations — Africa is replete with natural and energy resources. The judicious exploitation of these resources with a view to the economic recovery of the continent is hindered, however, by outside factors such as the external debt. The total amount of that debt — $48 billion in 1978 — has been estimated at $285 billion in 1993, or over 96 per cent of the gross national product of African countries. This handicap, alleviated only slightly by recent measures, should be noted by all of Africa's creditors, including the multilateral institutions, which account for about 25 per cent of all debts and drain 40 per cent of the total payments in the service of the African debt.

Africa, the part of the world that depends most upon outside financing for its development because of its minimal internal savings, has, paradoxically has been the only continent not to benefit from the recent increase in financial flows towards developing countries. These flows towards Africa were reduced by 14 per cent in 1991 and by 40 per cent in 1992. In addition, Africa still is not attracting private investors despite the efforts made to improve its economic climate and to offer foreign investors the most favourable legal and fiscal conditions.

This lack of enthusiasm in business circles, exacerbated by the reduction of public assistance for development, is further aggravated by rather pessimistic prospects linked to the entry into force of the Final Act of the Uruguay Round. Indeed, all analyses and studies indicate that the African countries are among those that will be affected by the new multilateral business rules, whether in terms of the loss of tariff preferences or as net importers of foodstuffs. The resulting losses will combine with the penalties that African countries already suffer in the sphere of raw materials and terms of trade.

Our debates last year focused on the question of establishing a commodity diversification fund, as recommended by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and by the Secretary-General. So far, differences of approach have prevented a positive decision on this matter, but we hope for such an outcome during the current session. Clarification of the economic and financial bases, as well as of the technical implications, of such a decision having been provided, nothing except an absence of political will should further delay the establishment of this fund, which — need it be emphasized? — would be the first concrete realization of the United Nations New Agenda.

Albeit modest, this question is of symbolic importance in that it is an effective test of the chances of translating into reality undertakings contained in the Agenda.

In fact, as an excellent recent study by the Economic Commission for Africa abundantly demonstrates, the stake in the Agenda goes back to the fundamental question of knowing whether the international community is ready to treat Africa as a full-fledged partner in the world economy. Africa is a continent in the midst of several transitions. In the precarious conditions that mark its process of transition, external assistance has a decisive role to play. The helping hands extended to Africa today will be greatly rewarded tomorrow. An Africa irreversibly committed to the course of sustained development and growth and fully integrated into the world economy will open up great opportunities in the field of international trade and will bring increased prosperity, peace and stability to the world.

Mr. Runge (Germany): I have the honour of speaking in the name of the European Union, Austria, Finland and Sweden.

Although the item on the New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s has come up at a late stage in this session of the General Assembly, it is of primary importance in the field of economic and social

development. Africa is the poorest of the five continents. About two thirds of the least developed countries are located there. The rate of economic growth in the region, especially in sub-Saharan Africa, remains low. For more than a decade it has been insufficient to raise per capita gross domestic product. Wide areas of extreme poverty persist. Often the poorest and most vulnerable groups are not reached by our common efforts. Africa's integration into the world economy is weak. Its human and institutional resources have still to be developed to their full capacity. It is therefore right that the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s, which was adopted in 1991, should address the problems and needs of the region as a whole.

The European Union, as a neighbouring region with long-standing and intensive relations with Africa, has a special interest in that continent's economic, social and political welfare and in the implementation of the New Agenda. In this context, we should like to mention the encouraging cooperation between the European Union and the States members of the Southern African Development Community, as confirmed at the conference held in Berlin in September this year.

Despite the generally weak growth performance in Africa, we note with some hope that a considerable number of African countries registered relatively high growth rates in 1993 — in some cases, leading to an increase in per capita income. These countries tend to be the ones that implement structural adjustment programmes supported by the international community. Many African countries have embarked on processes of democratization and economic reform. Although standards of living have not improved everywhere, there are encouraging signs that African countries and their partners in development are on the way to having a more effective and lasting strategy.

Among the positive developments of the last year, we commend in particular the measures taken by the countries of the CFA-franc zone and the support that the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank are providing. A stable macroeconomic policy accompanied by structural improvements — in particular, with regard to the role of the market and the private sector — and an outward-oriented economy, together with the development of human resources and institutional capacity, produce positive results if these measures are resolutely pursued and implemented.

We also recognize increasingly that social aspects and the participation of the weakest strata should be integral aspects of all reform and development efforts. In order to maximize the benefits of economic growth, therefore, we strongly support moves towards popular participation in decision-making and greater openness and accountability on the part of Governments. Not the least important fact is that more transparent government and a clearly understood legal framework improve the climate for investment and growth.

We are aware of the continuing difficulties that the poorest and most heavily indebted African countries are experiencing with regard to the servicing of their debt, and we therefore encourage the Paris Club to pursue its efforts to improve the terms applied to these countries and, where appropriate, to grant a reduction of their bilateral official debt sufficient to enable them to exit from the rescheduling process.

An important factor with regard to development in Africa is population growth, which continues to exceed economic growth. The important results of the Conference held recently in Cairo should be taken fully into account and should be integrated into all policies and cooperation efforts for development in Africa. The population and development provisions of the New Agenda for the Development of Africa already point in the right direction, which is the adoption of such an integrated approach. This should now be even more resolutely pursued on the basis of the consensus achieved in Cairo.

The international economic environment is an important factor for the development of the African economies. Africa's terms of trade have recently improved after a long period of decline, and we can expect such a development to have positive results for the growth prospects of African economies. This, however, will not diminish the need for many of these countries to diversify their exports. The successful conclusion of the Uruguay Round improves the opportunities in this area by enhancing growth in the world economy and by improving market access for manufactured products. The dynamic effects of increased trade are likely to be of major significance for Africa too.

Any negative effects of an erosion of preferences or of short-term price rises in the agricultural field should be largely offset by the new beneficial effects of increased trade. We recognize that African countries — particularly the least developed among them — need assistance if they are to benefit fully from the new opportunities. The European Union therefore supports the

implementation of the provisions in this regard agreed in Marrakesh, as well as the special and differential treatment provided for developing countries.

The traditional cooperation of the European Union with many African countries under the Lomé IV Convention includes the areas of trade and diversification. Considerable financial assistance is being disbursed under various chapters of the Convention for these purposes. Other international and regional institutions also devote substantial resources to the diversification of African economies and commodity development.

I would like to mention in particular the World Bank, which supports efforts to create the right environment for the private sector and also finances diversification projects or projects with strong diversification components. The second window of the Common Fund is another important mechanism to this end. It has continuously improved its operations. The European Union is prepared to cooperate to improve it further, and a number of projects designed to benefit African economies are under way. The draft resolution introduced by Ghana on the implementation of the New Agenda for the Development of Africa addresses particularly the issue of diversification. We welcome the idea contained in the draft resolution to use existing arrangements and to enhance the benefit African countries can derive from them. We are working with all other delegations to achieve consensus.

The European Union is the biggest donor to Africa and provides more than half of official development aid received by Africa. The Union remains strongly committed to maintaining its position as the major donor to African countries. We strongly support the international community's efforts to maintain, through bilateral and multilateral official financing, positive net resource flows to the poorest countries, including those in Africa. The focus of our official development aid is even more pronounced when the acceding countries are taken into account.

Turning now to the role and overall strategy of the United Nations system with regard to Africa, we support human development, the strengthening of institutional capacities and economic reform policies as central efforts of the United Nations system to support African development. An enhanced role for the private sector and the improvement of the regulatory and administrative environment for it should be a concern of high priority. We support every effort to improve the status and the role of women. The reform of the public sector also remains an essential aim in many countries.

With regard to the social dimension of stabilization and structural adjustment, we encourage increased consultation and collaboration between the Bretton Woods institutions and the other organizations of the system. In the efforts to coordinate the assistance of the United Nations system, use should be made of the instruments and policies cited in General Assembly resolution 47/199, in particular the country strategy note and the resident coordinator system. These instruments should be widely used to establish an effectively coordinated development policy in accordance with the priorities and special needs of each country, including the need for adjustment and its social ramifications.

Let me conclude by reiterating our firm commitment to Africa's development as one of the world's most urgent priorities. With our concerted efforts and the right priorities we should be able to make African development and integration into the world economy a clear prospect.

Mr. Elaraby (Egypt) (*interpretation from Arabic*): At the outset, the delegation of Egypt wishes to declare that it is in full agreement with the statement made on this agenda item by the representative of Tunisia, the current Chairman of the Organization of African Unity, and with the statement of the representative of Algeria, the current Chairman of the Group of 77, on this agenda item to which we attach great importance as it relates to the present and future of Africa. The item is a carry over from the last session of the General Assembly, at which time the delegation of Egypt, then Chairman of the Organization of African Unity, negotiated on the subject. Our negotiations culminated in the adoption by the General Assembly of resolution 48/214, which paved the way for the achievement of more progress in this session.

We welcome the Secretary-General's two reports contained in documents A/48/335 and A/48/914, which we consider a positive step towards implementation of the recommendations contained in the "United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s". We especially welcome the two reports' proposals on establishing a diversification fund for Africa's commodities, within the framework of the African Development Bank, with initial financial resources ranging from $50 million to $75 million. We believe the proposed fund can assist Africa in diversifying its commodity structures in more effectively than the Common Fund for Commodities.

During the last session of the General Assembly the delegation of Egypt followed closely and attentively the development of the consultations on this important subject, and we have continued to do so in the current session. We are convinced that it is high time we moved from words to deeds in a manner that would make it possible to implement the Secretary-General's proposal now, during this session, particularly since the African Group has shown much more flexibility in its positions than it did last year. The delegation of Egypt is confident that this implementation could be achieved by focusing on the practical rather than on the formal. It is not important whether or not the proposed financing machinery should take the form of a fund, facility or window. The important thing is for the machinery to be set up within the framework of the African Development Bank. The delegation of Egypt also believes that this should be done within the seventh replenishment of the African Development Bank, which will cover the period from 1994 to 1996. However, this would require that financial resources which will be allocated to the diversification of African commodities should be made available from new, additional resources as in the absence of such resources, the allocation will be no more than a process of rechannelling of financial resources that would be transferred or deducted from the allocations to other areas of expenditure of which the African States are in dire need.

If it is deemed to be too late to finance the required facility within the framework of the seventh replenishment of the African Development Bank, and we do not believe it to be too late, then there is nothing to prevent us from taking the initiative of adopting a resolution to introduce a new window for the diversification of commodities within the framework of the African Development Bank which would be financed through the "special contribution" formulas, with the understanding that its financing over the coming periods will be from the African Development Bank's future replenishment, starting with eighth.

The world economy is moving out of a long drawn-out stagnation. The socio-economic situation seems to be improving in most regions of the world, except in Africa. It is regrettable indeed to note the continued aggravation of problems and crises in the African States, which languish under the heavy burden of external debts of $285 billion. The servicing of these debts swallows up approximately 25 per cent of those African countries' export earnings, at a time when more than 20 million Africans are threatened by famine, AIDS, malaria and other endemic diseases.

It is for the sake of Africa, and in the hope of coming to grips with one of its most difficult problems, namely, the diversification of its export commodity and production structures, that we look forward to the speedy reappointment of a chairman to lead consultations on this important agenda item towards the adoption of a resolution on the issue that would ensure the realization of Africa's aspirations and ambitions and thereby given concrete form to the hoped-for relationship of partnership and cooperation between Africa and the donor States and institutions.

Mr. Ould Ely (Mauritania) (*interpretation from French*): I should like at the outset to associate my delegation with the views already expressed by the Ambassadors of Tunisia, who spoke on behalf of the current Chairman of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), and of Algeria, who spoke as Chairman of the Group of 77 and on behalf of China.

Mauritania, which has always worked to achieve African solidarity, is pleased to take part today in this debate which is important in every way to Africa.

The consideration of agenda item 154, "United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s", is taking place at a time when the African continent's economic and social crisis is growing more acute. It is taking place three years after the adoption of General Assembly resolution 46/151, of 18 December 1991, which provided for the establishment of this New Agenda, designed to fill in the gaps and correct the shortcomings of the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development 1986-1990, whose results had fallen far short of the expectations to which it had given rise.

The adoption of the New Agenda had at the time revealed the high priority the United Nations was giving to the question of African economic recovery and development. A certain number of measures or initiatives were taken to promote the implementation of the decisions adopted and to avoid the disappointing experience of the Programme of Action. The International Conference on African Development, held at Tokyo on 5 and 6 October 1993, was one of the efforts deployed in this context, to create awareness of the problem and promote the continent's development.

Three years after launching that new partnership agreement, we are forced to recognize that Africa's economic and social situation, far from having improved,

has continued to deteriorate in a climate marked by a net decline in export earnings and in the flow of investments and a corresponding increase in external debt. In 1992, for example, the real growth rate of the gross national product of African countries was only 1.5 per cent, in other words half the rate of population growth, whereas external debt had climbed to more than $288 billion. Since the beginning of the decade of the 1990s, the total net flow of resources to Africa has steadily declined, and for the same year 1992 it was 22 per cent below the 1990 level.

Official development aid has also slowed. The average contribution by donor States, which has remained below the target of 0.7 per cent of gross national product recommended by the United Nations, has even fallen in recent years — from an average of 0.38 per cent in the 1980s to approximately 0.33 per cent today. This reduction in financial flows has occurred in spite of the consensus expressed by the African countries and the international community on the need to give priority to increasing the flow of external capital to Africa, and in spite of the commitments entered into by various parties.

In this already difficult context, the forthcoming entry into force of the new agreements on the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) leading to the establishment of the World Trade Organization could exacerbate the problems of the African countries even further. Indeed, every study undertaken so far has recognized that while world trade as a whole will benefit from the new agreements Africa, for its part, may well find itself a loser for some time to come. In fact, with the elimination of the main tariff reductions of the Lomé agreements or the generalized system of preferences, the tariff advantages African has enjoyed will disappear. This will be reflected in a lessening of the preferential margins of 28 per cent with regard to Europe, 40 per cent with regard to the United States and 15.7 per cent with regard to Japan. The elimination of agricultural subsidies will affect the price of food products, which will probably rise an average of 5 per cent and as high as 10 per cent for cereals. Natural resources like fish or mining products such as iron will probably, in this framework, lose their preferential margins of 60 per cent within the generalized system of preferences and 16 per cent within the Lomé Convention.

With a very limited production base, a constant decline in export earnings, a very large external debt and other financial constraints, such as the very low level of investments and the substantial reduction in development assistance, it will be difficult for Africa to achieve the desired improvements in its current situation without the contribution of the international community. Indeed, to meet this very real need, the New Agenda advocated a minimum net amount of $30 billion for official development assistance in 1992 and an average increase of 4 per cent per year thereafter.

African leaders, aware that they bear the primary responsibility for the development of their countries, have committed their States to vast structural, economic and political adjustment programmes designed to promote democracy and the transition to market economies. They are determined to promote human rights, effectiveness in their administrations, and the role of the private sector, while rationalizing public expenditure. The adoption on 3 June 1991 at the continental level of the Abuja Treaty, which created the African Economic Community, and the establishment of mechanisms to prevent, manage and settle conflicts in Africa stem from their determination fully to assume their responsibilities and to create an appropriate framework for sustainable development.

Indeed, without peace and stability it will be difficult to promote sustainable development, which is most likely to thrive within the context of large political and economic groupings. That is why Mauritania, in strengthening its cooperation with the Western African States in the context of the Economic Community of West African States, very willingly joined the other States of the Maghreb in creating the Arab Maghreb Union. This dual membership stems from our determination to participate in Africa's general development while advocating and encouraging Arab-African solidarity.

The outstanding efforts made by many African countries to face the many challenges involved in the continent's development will continue to be frustrated so long as the international community does not honour the commitments it undertook in the New Agenda. In this connection, we regret that since the adoption of resolution 48/214, of 23 December 1993, it has not be possible to relaunch negotiations for the creation of a diversification fund for Africa's commodities. With the forthcoming establishment of the World Trade Organization, it is all the more urgent to establish this fund. We therefore urge all our partners to seek the speediest possible solution to this question.

Today, Africa must not only diversify its products if it is to be integrated in the new competitive system that will emerge from the new GATT agreements, but also

promote, in cooperation with the developed countries, innovative and bold action in the framework of a global and sustainable solution to the debt crisis. That is why the proposal to hold an international conference on Africa's external debt should finally be favourably received. We believe that any hope of relaunching the African economies without a definitive solution to that heavy burden would be dashed. Hence, the General Assembly and its constituent nations must invest more of their authority in ensuring that these demands are met.

Before concluding, I wish to reaffirm my Government's support for the praiseworthy efforts of the Office of the Special Coordinator for Africa and the Least Developed Countries, which, although the means it requires have been slow in coming and insufficient, is striving to fulfil its mandate satisfactorily. We hope that the United Nations will finally accord concrete and speedy priority to Africa's recovery and development.

Mr. Wang (China) (*interpretation from Chinese*): Two years have elapsed since the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s was initiated. In these two years, the African countries have made tremendous efforts to implement the New Agenda, and yet there has been no significant improvement in their social and economic plight. Rather, the economic gap between them and other regions of the world is widening. They are plagued by three major problems: growing indebtedness, a decreasing inflow or even reverse flow of capital, and worsening terms of trade. Their total foreign debt has already exceeded $300 billion. Their terms of trade are also deteriorating. Old trade barriers have yet to be removed, while new ones are emerging. All these factors have seriously hampered Africa's economic development.

The New Agenda is a commitment undertaken by the African countries themselves, but it has also won the support of all the other United Nations Members. In recent years, many African countries have carried out economic and social reforms for which they have paid dearly. Regrettably, their endeavours have not been matched by any strong support or cooperation from the international community. Many of the objectives set in the Agenda are far from being achieved.

It is very clear that global stability and sustained development will remain elusive until the gap between the rich and poor countries is narrowed. The recovery and development of the African economy bear not only on the long-term stability of the African countries but also on the sustained and sound economic development of the world. True, Africa's development, in the final analysis, will depend on the efforts of the African countries and people themselves, but without a favourable external environment and adequate outside assistance many African countries will be unable to free themselves from their current predicament. We therefore hope that the international community will give due attention to Africa's difficulties and take them into serious consideration. We hope that at the same time, it will adopt a positive approach and take concrete measures to ensure the attainment of the objectives of the Agenda.

To this end, we propose that the international community make sincere efforts to remove trade barriers, provide new resources and transfer technology. The countries concerned should fulfil their commitment by creating favourable external conditions for the African countries that will steer them onto the track of healthy development.

The international community should support the process of economic cooperation of the African countries. We are pleased to note that the trend towards regional groupings among African countries continues to grow. The approval of the Abuja Treaty by two thirds of the African countries last May represents the formal start of Africa's economic integration. The admission of South Africa into the Southern African Development Community has greatly enhanced the aggregate economic weight of the organization. All this will contribute to the overall development of the African countries and should be welcomed and strongly supported by the international community.

The conclusion of the Uruguay round multilateral trade talks poses a huge challenge to Africa's development. As part of the developing countries, the African countries made their contribution to the success of the talks. We hope that the international community will in turn make efforts to alleviate the negative impact on them resulting from the talks.

The role of the United Nations in the process of Africa's development is not to be overlooked. We hope that the United Nations will formulate and carry out plans and projects in the light of Africa's actual situation and provide strong support for the African countries in cooperation between them and with other regions.

China enjoys traditional friendship with the African countries. The Chinese Government and people deeply

understands and very much sympathizes with their current plight. In spite of its own difficulties and problems, China has done what it can to assist the African countries. The Chinese Government is ready to work together with the African countries, cooperate with them in various forms and make its contribution to the attainment of the objectives in the Agenda.

Mrs. Junejo (Pakistan): The face of a young mother with an undernourished child, fleeing from hunger somewhere in Africa, appears on the cover of every journal and every television screen. It arouses a great deal of sympathy. But, unfortunately it has not been able to generate concerted international action to avert the mounting human tragedies in Africa.

According to the World Economic and Social Survey 1994 the economic prospects of Africa remain poor. A reversal of the trend of declining per capita output is not in sight even though considerable efforts have been made at economic reform and adjustment.

In addition to its economic difficulties, Africa has now become the region where political instability and violence are most widespread. The roots of this civil strife, in most cases, can be traced to the failure of development. Consolidation of peace and political stability throughout Africa is critical both on short-term humanitarian grounds; and it must be achieved to enhance the prospects for long-term economic development. Given the nature and the magnitude of the challenge, success will require a strong and abiding commitment by the international community.

In Africa, the pattern of slow growth persisted in 1993. Output grew by 1.7 per cent in 1993, an improvement over 1992 but still well below the growth rate of the population.

Except for the slight improvement in commodity prices, all other major economic indicators remain sombre. The savings rates in African countries continued to decline. While most African countries depended heavily on external financial resources, commitments of the African Development Fund, the concessional facility of the African Development Bank, fell by more than a third. Similarly, official development assistance to African countries was also greatly affected by the overall 10 per cent fall in concessional arrangements through multilateral organizations. Africa was virtually bypassed in the competition for foreign direct investment. The economic situation was further aggravated for the CFA countries since their de-linking from the French franc.

Africa's export earnings continue to stagnate. The continent lost 3.5 per cent in its terms of trade in 1993, which reduced the purchasing power of Africa's 1993 exports by over $3 billion relative to 1992 prices. The African countries suffered a trade loss of $10 billion in relation to 1989.

These statistics are aggravated by the protectionist tendencies in the developed countries. It is estimated that developing countries in general lose about $100 billion a year in export revenues as a result of market barriers in developed countries, or almost twice the official development assistance that developed countries provide to developing countries. Africa has been severely hit by this pattern of trade. Since 1985, Africa's share of trade fell to under 2 per cent of world trade. Thus, the special arrangements made for many African and low-income countries have so far proved insufficient to respond to their goals of economic diversification, industrialization and export expansion.

The preliminary assessments of the impact of the Uruguay Round negotiations on the trade of most African countries are not very encouraging. In recognition of the expected extra burden on the African economies, especially of the least developed countries among them, the Uruguay Round package and the Marrakesh Declaration provide for special arrangements for Africa. It is hoped that, in the implementation of these provisions and the setting in place of the compensatory mechanisms envisaged therein, the international community and especially the developed countries will fulfil their responsibilities in trying to ensure that Africa is not the loser once again.

The debt burden remains onerous for most African countries. Despite cancellation, the official debt of some among them has increased. The $305 billion owed by Africa — and even more, the $152 billion owed by sub-Saharan Africa — are well beyond their debt-carrying capacity. Most of this debt is owed to multilateral financial institutions. Concerted efforts for cancellation of official debt, both bilateral and multilateral, owed by the poorest and the alleviation of the debt burden of the rest of the African countries, especially those in sub-Saharan Africa, are essential.

The Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme, Mr. Gustav Speth, speaking at the African American Institute, earlier this year, observed that history has not been fair to Africa. Two externally imposed experiences — the slave trade and colonialism —

interrupted the process of indigenous State formation and development of the several great empires of the region and introduced artificially imposed systems of administration and production. Africa has suffered as a result of these foreign impositions. The causes of civil strife rooted in underdevelopment need to be addressed.

Africa is becoming increasingly marginalized in the world economy. The New Agenda for the Development of Africa recognized that positive change and recovery in the African economic crisis required both national and international efforts. This was reaffirmed at the Tokyo International Conference on African Development. While stressing that Africa's development is the primary responsibility of Africans, the world community made a commitment to give full and tangible support to the efforts of African countries. It is clear that Africa cannot succeed in meeting the challenges it confronts unless it is provided with external financial assistance and strengthened international efforts are made to create a global economic climate conducive to African development efforts. The New Agenda set out the priority objectives of African countries, which are the accelerated transformation, integration and diversification of their economies to integrate them into the world economy, reduce their vulnerabilities to external shocks, increase their dynamism and enhance their self-reliance.

Africa's commitment to the New Agenda is reflected in the reform measures instituted in the effective economic management of exchange rates, public enterprises, population planning and the agricultural sector. These measures have been adopted despite high political, social and economic costs. The people of Africa have borne these painful sacrifices with great dignity. They rightly want the downward trend in the development and impoverishment of their people to come to an end. The expectation is that genuine international economic cooperation will lead to national revitalization and recovery.

The African countries have shown great seriousness in keeping its part of the bargain. Despite their earnest efforts to carry out strict structural adjustment policies to improve their economic performance, the majority of them have found little reprieve from the unfavourable external economic environment, harsh climatic conditions, civil war and strife.

The adverse effects of domestic and external resource constraints on African productivity have far outweighed the positive impact of policy reforms. On the other hand, the international community has not been as forthcoming as was expected in fulfilling its part of the pact.

It was recognized during the discussions on the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s that the diversification of African economies could be a critical impetus to supplement the development efforts of African countries. Over the past three years, the question of a diversification fund for Africa has been discussed. These discussions have produced no results despite the great flexibility shown by the African delegations. It is time that the matter was resolved, taking into account the options presented by the African Group. It is also critical that our present negotiations in no way erode the commitments made in 1991.

We should not lose the initiative taken in 1991 to address the African crisis. The international community, and Africa in particular, cannot afford to see more Rwandas and Somalias. In a world blessed with abundant resources, more people cannot be allowed to join those living in abject poverty. Can the international community stand back and watch in silence as hunger, deprivation, pain and misery continue to ravage a proud people? Will we only respond to the photograph of a dying child on the cover of "Time" magazine? How many States are we willing to watch fail before we mobilize the collective political will to overcome the problems of economic stagnation and social disruption which lie at the root of the multiple crises confronting the great continent of Africa? The prescriptions have been provided in the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s and at the Tokyo International Conference on African Development. What we need is action by the world community.

Pakistan is a developing country. We confront the problems of development and many challenges. Despite all the difficulties, we have succeeded in maintaining a fairly encouraging rate of economic growth. We are interested in sharing our development experience with other developing countries, especially our brothers and sisters in Africa. In the spirit of promoting cooperation and solidarity with Africa, Pakistan has instituted a special programme which allows us to share our experiences with our friends in Africa. The Africa Programme, as it is called, which was launched in 1987 provides for scholarships through which African students and professionals receive training in Pakistan. Hundreds of young Africans train in Pakistan in various fields each year. Similarly, hundreds of Pakistani doctors, engineers

and other professionals participate in Africa's development process. The possibilities of technical cooperation under the Africa Programme are open to all our African brothers and sisters. We look forward to enlarging the Africa Programme to respond in a modest way to the challenges and needs of Africa — a continent which we are certain will win the battle for its economic and social development because of the courage and sacrifices of its people and, we hope, the solidarity of the world community.

Mr. Seydou (Niger) (*interpretation from French*): The failure to implement the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development lay behind our Assembly's adoption in 1991, in resolution 46/151, of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s.

Today, we are again considering the implementation of this New Agenda. Following the statements made by the Permanent Representative of Tunisia on behalf of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the Permanent Representative of Algeria on behalf of the Group of 77, and other representatives, I would like, on behalf of the delegation of Niger, to state the importance we attach to one of the recommendations of the New Agenda — the establishment of a diversification fund for Africa's commodities.

The report of the Secretary-General in document A/48/914, which we welcome, sets forth the reasons for the General Assembly's inability at its forty-eighth session to adopt the document containing the recommendation on the creation of that fund.

One of the main reasons was the need to ensure that the African Development Bank would be able to host and manage the diversification fund. Since the beginning of the forty-ninth session, there have been consultations and contacts on this matter; a letter dated 6 February 1994 was sent by the President of the African Development Bank to the Under-Secretary-General for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development; and a meeting was held on 9 December with one of the officials of the Bank. All this has convinced us that the Bank is in agreement to host and manage the diversification fund for Africa's commodities.

However, the African Development Bank has made one condition: initial resources must be deposited in the fund. These resources can be obtained in two ways: first, in the framework of negotiations on the replenishment of the Bank's resources, in which the donor countries could specify an amount for the initial resources to be put into the diversification fund; or, secondly, the donor countries could make a special contribution to set up the fund.

The African countries were prepared to consider the first possibility — that is, to obtain the money for the diversification fund in the framework of the seventh replenishment of the African Development Bank's resources and the Technical Assistance Fund. Unfortunately, information from the Bank indicates that negotiations on the seventh replenishment are drawing to a close and that the $2.7 billion provided to that end are already spoken for, with no mention by the donor countries as to allocations to the diversification fund for Africa's commodities.

Yet consultations with our partners since the beginning of this session have confirmed our feeling that they have adopted a new approach to the speedy establishment of the diversification fund.

With the end of negotiations on a seventh replenishment of the African Development Bank, the second possibility remains: special contributions, which are a normal practice in the Bank and which would apply because of the urgency of a number of matters. Thus, donor countries could make a special contribution to establish the initial resources of the diversification fund for African commodities, given the urgency we attach to the problem. Though we may be late in the normal process of the seventh replenishment of the African Development Bank, we are not late for the system of special contributions.

Thus, Niger feels that it is time for the donor community to show that Africa is truly among its concerns and priorities by taking concrete action in the form of special contributions to the African Development Fund. We appeal to the international community to respond as a matter of urgency so that these contributions can be made as soon as possible.

My delegation wishes also to remind the international community that in financial institutions such as the African Development Bank, the Common Fund for Commodities and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) there is already activity relating to the diversification of commodities. But these are projects that have already reached the stage of securing financing.

The fund we earnestly seek would promote the diversification of the African commodity sector by

financing technically and economically viable diversification projects. It would enable African projects to reach the stage of gaining financing from financial institutions. It would precede activities of such bodies as the Common Fund and UNIDO, which relate to projects already at the financing stage. The diversification fund African countries wish to see would enable us to consider ideas for projects and, in cooperation with national diversification councils, to bring them to the financing stage.

This is a crucial moment for African commodities, since it is clear that the diversification of African economies is among the solutions to the overall problem of African economic recovery and development.

African States want to assure the international community that the creation of national diversification councils composed of representatives of the private, the scientific and technical and the governmental sectors would enable projects not only to be realistic but also to have a more solid technical orientation under Government coordination. Along with the African Development Bank, these national diversification councils would be focal points, which would facilitate exchanges and a certain amount of technical training for the council members through their relationship with the Bank. This could meet the concern of some institutions that fear poor management or poor utilization of the fund's resources.

Let me call the attention of the international community to another element of the African initiative: it has been careful to provide that project selection criteria should be determined by the African Development Bank to ensure that the management of this facility would not upset the Bank's normal management or give rise to special expenses, and also that criteria set by an institution able to finance a project should make it possible for that project to come closer to the necessary framework. That is why African States did not want to set the criteria through a General Assembly resolution, which might have slowed access to financing for projects.

Finally, the inter-agency task force mandated to follow up the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s would also be involved in this process as adviser to the African Development Bank in carrying out these projects; this will enable the General Assembly to follow the implementation and development of the diversification fund for commodities.

Now the international community must show that it is ready to support Africa in its development efforts, as called for in the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s:

> "The international community accepts the principle of shared responsibility and full partnership with Africa and therefore commits itself to giving full and tangible support to the African efforts". (*resolution 46/151, annex II, para. 1*)

Mr. Maruyama (Japan): Japan attaches great importance to the issue of African development, as indicated by our having hosted the Tokyo International Conference on African Development in October of last year. It is our intention to continue to support the self-help efforts of the African countries, particularly through assistance in areas of agricultural production, basic human needs, infrastructure and support for structural adjustment policies.

One of the conclusions of the Tokyo Conference was that, while no model of development can simply be transferred from one region to another, South-South cooperation between Asia and Africa would be extremely useful. As a follow-up to the Tokyo Declaration, Japan and Indonesia, together with the United Nations, the United Nations Development Programme and the Global Coalition for Africa, have convened an Asia-Africa forum entitled "Sharing of experience", with the participation of African and Asian countries, from 12 to 17 December. The forum provides an opportunity for direct dialogue between African decision-makers and their counterparts from Asia and will serve as a launching pad for concrete projects and programmes in the future.

My delegation agrees about the importance of primary commodities for the export earnings of many African countries and about the need for diversification to reduce the volatility of those earnings. While many African countries are now engaged in efforts to diversify their economies, their efforts are impeded by a host of problems such as a lack of human and financial resources, low productivity, an underdeveloped private sector, and a lack of incentives for foreign investors. All these problems need to be addressed if we are to be successful in the diversification efforts.

In this connection, we would like to emphasize the importance of human-resource development and the role of the private sector as key factors in diversifying the

African economies. The Declaration adopted at the Tokyo Conference recognized that

> "the private sector is vital as an engine for sustainable development" and that "though foreign aid has an impact on development, its role is only supplementary in magnitude and catalytic in nature".

My delegation considers that the draft resolution on the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s requires further consultation. While taking note of the need to assist the preparatory phase of African diversification projects, we believe that such assistance should be provided through the existing financial resources and mechanisms. Japan considers that the present draft resolution should suggest only in a general manner that the African Development Fund and the Common Fund for Commodities should provide their assistance in the financing of the preparatory phase of commodity-diversification projects in the African countries. My delegation hopes that, with a flexible and realistic attitude on the part of the parties concerned, consensus can be reached on this draft resolution.

Mr. Mongbe (Benin) *(interpretation from French)*: The "Implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s" is and should be for us Africans one of the main agenda items of this forty-ninth session of the General Assembly, over which you, Mr. President, a worthy son of Africa, have presided with so much skill and talent since the beginning of our work on 20 September last.

Before communicating to the Assembly some of my delegation's thoughts on this item, I should like to indicate that my delegation endorses the statements made here by the Permanent Representative of Tunisia on behalf of the current Chairman of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), and also by my brother the Permanent Representative of Algeria on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

Last year, during the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly, African delegations, as they had done the previous year, expressed their disquiet and concern at the lethargy that had been witnessed since the New Agenda was launched by the adoption of resolution 46/151 of 18 December 1991.

A few days after the suspension of the forty-seventh session, the Secretary-General presided over the first high-level meeting on African development, which he had convened and which was held at Geneva on 28 December 1992. That first meeting was followed by a second one, held at Rome on 17 and 18 April 1993. These meetings dealt with the following issues: Africa's external debt; diversification of African economies; regional and subregional economic integration in Africa; and improvement of the coordination of non-governmental organization activities for the development of Africa at the level of Governments and of the United Nations system.

My delegation was pleased at the time, and is still pleased, that the Secretary-General had heeded the appeal made by African delegations during the General Assembly's general debate at its forty-seventh session by convening and personally presiding over the two meetings of the panel of high-level personalities on African development.

The delegation of Benin, together with other African delegations and the Chairman of the Group of 77, speaking on behalf of all the States members of the Group, emphasized at the forty-eighth session the relevance of the conclusions of the study contained in the report of the Secretary-General recommending, *inter alia*, the creation of a diversification fund for Africa's commodities within the African Development Bank.

According to that study, the fund would be established for an initial period of three to four years, with a starting level of resources of $50 million to $75 million to provide assistance to African countries for the preparation of commodity-diversification programmes and projects. This idea was the subject of lengthy and hard negotiations in a General Assembly working group among a number of delegations from developed countries and representatives of the Group of African States. To give the group a chance to reach a tangible result, the General Assembly, before suspending the forty-eighth session for the year-end holidays, adopted on 23 December 1993 resolution 48/214, whereby it decided to resort to informal consultations, whose recommendations would be examined at a resumed session with a view to the adoption of a final decision. Despite the praiseworthy efforts of the President of the forty-eighth session of the Assembly, Mr. Insanally of Guyana, these consultations were never held because of the absence of a coordinator, following the departure from New York of Mr. Huslid, Ambassador of Norway. We would like now to pay a well-deserved and sincere tribute to Ambassador Huslid for the patience and diplomatic skill he evinced in the face of all the

difficulties he encountered as chairman of the working group responsible for the negotiations.

In implementation of resolution 48/214, and taking into account the evolution of the situation, the Secretary-General issued a new report in April 1994 (A/48/914) calling for the establishment of a fund that would be devoted solely to giving guidance on new ideas for projects concerning the diversification of African commodities and to financing them for a period of three or four years. It was clearly indicated that the financing operations would be centred on the initial phases of the creation of the projects, on market research, on the preparation of feasibility studies and analyses of the project size most likely to attract financing.

In contrast with the original idea of a formal fund with all that would be required in the way of heavy and costly administration, the new report advocated the establishment of a mechanism which would have a modest secretariat within the African Development Bank at Abidjan and would serve as a centre for information and an intermediary for the exchange of data, research and experience. The proposals in the April report give priority to a fund that would facilitate the start-up of projects or funding for the later stages of projects. The secretariat was to work with diversification councils envisaged for each African country. After making a series of concessions, the African delegations finally came to accept a new solution which was, in fact, very far from their initial position and which can be summarized as follows.

> "Invites the States participating in the replenishment of the African Development Fund of the African Development Bank to make a special initial contribution of $50 to $75 million for a three-year period to finance the preparatory phase of diversification projects and programmes for African commodities.
>
> "Invites the Governing Body of the Common Fund for Commodities, whose headquarters is in Amsterdam, to take into account when considering the future activities of the Fund the special case of African commodities in its policy of support for commodity development, in particular the preparation of feasibility studies aimed at diversifying their export sector and to review its access procedures and policies for African countries to enable them to request financial support, either directly or through regional or subregional organs."

You will agree with me, Mr. President, that these are quite modest proposals for so vast a continent with such vast problems to be solved. It is difficult to understand that those who are convinced of the need for Africa to broaden the basis of its commodities exports and of the urgency of African countries' diversifying their economies so as to strengthen them are yet unable to reach agreement on the surest way to achieve this; that is, to establish a mechanism — very small in administrative terms — to direct operations linked to the diversification of African commodities.

As I had occasion to point out from this rostrum last month during the debate on the Agenda for Development, the only impression that can be gained is that African problems are to continue to be sent for discussion from study groups to working groups, from seminars to conferences, from programme of action to agenda, without ever moving on to the stage of effective implementation of adopted measures and recommendations.

Africa, as generous as its heart-shaped contours on the map would indicate, has always been prepared to join others in consensus on resolutions or decisions concerning other parts of the world, while questions dear to it are rejected almost at session's end and then finally deferred because of a lack of consensus. In view of this situation, my delegation questions the seriousness that our Assembly attaches to its own decision making Africa one of the five priorities of the United Nations.

General Assembly resolution 48/214 and draft resolution A/49/L.44 encourage the establishment of national structures that would operate jointly with the mechanism to be set up within the African Development Bank.

Benin wishes to reiterate its support for the decision regarding the establishment, in each African country, of a national diversification council that could, among other functions, prepare and evaluate diversification projects, taking into account not only the structural and institutional situation but also the available infrastructures and human resources.

Nevertheless, we must emphasize that the effectiveness and success of diversification mechanisms for African commodities will depend on progress achieved in solving existing problems in certain crucial areas, such as Africa's external debt; the need for increased official development assistance; the contribution

of new and additional resources; growth in direct foreign investments; the promotion of small and medium-sized industries and companies; and the transfer and adaptation of technologies for processing commodities, backed by the establishment or strengthening of existing research and development structures that will guarantee, in the long term, the diversification of African economies.

The success of commodity diversification will depend also on measures to be envisaged on the political, geographical and structural levels to modify current African trading systems, which constitute a barrier to South-South trade cooperation in general and to intra-African cooperation in particular.

Moreover, the results of the recent Marrakesh agreements are still far from having corrected the obvious shortcomings in Africa's trade relations with the rest of the world, and in particular with the developed world. On the contrary, all the studies carried out so far show that these agreements have no special provisions for Africa and the least developed countries and would thus aggravate the situation.

The special study on financial resource flows to Africa clearly shows the insufficiency of direct foreign investment in Africa, and in particular south of the Sahara; poorly mobilized national resources, both public and private; the low level of savings; and the drop in official development assistance.

The political and economic reforms undertaken by African States are not enough to arrive at a lasting solution. The international community, by adopting resolution 46/151 of 18 December 1991, committed itself to supporting African efforts to accelerate growth and achieve a human-centred, lasting and sustainable development. This support should translate into tangible and visible actions, measures and projects, as in the case of other devastated areas of the planet.

Regrettably, the financial resources slated for 1992 that Africa needs in order for its gross national product to reach a growth level of 6 per cent have still not arrived. The net amount of official development assistance required was $30 billion in 1992, with an average growth rate of 4 per cent per year, in accordance with paragraph 29 of the New Agenda. This situation is a strange reminder of the fate suffered by the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development, whose humiliating failure because of a lack of financial resources led us to negotiate the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s.

Within the United Nations, very few large-scale measures have been adopted since the preparation and adoption in 1991 of the New Agenda.

Indeed, the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for Africa and Least Developed Countries still suffers from a lack of financial and human resources to accomplish its mission of follow-up and effective implementation of the New Agenda. In this respect, I must point out that, despite the personal efforts of the staff of that body, we are still in a holding pattern because of the lack of financial resources, as I have just mentioned.

Because of the alarming situation of the United Nations in the implementation of the New Agenda, my delegation would urge the Secretary-General to invite all the organs, agencies and bodies of the United Nations system to integrate, as early as possible, the priorities of the New Agenda into their respective mandates and to allocate the needed resources so as to make these priorities operational in accordance with the concept of additionality, on which this Agenda is based, and with the five priorities and allocations for the 1990s. The integration of priorities and the allocation of adequate resources by the United Nations system will make it possible to achieve some goals, which can be pursued and improved both through the recommendations to be adopted after the high-level debate in the Economic and Social Council — which in 1995 will be devoted to the implementation of the New Agenda — and by means of decisions and resolutions in 1996, when the General Assembly will carry out its mid-term review.

Moreover, within the context of the implementation and the follow-up to be carried out by the United Nations system and by Africa, the Office of the Special Coordinator for Africa and the Least Developed Countries should, in 1995, in each of the five subregions of Africa, organize seminar-workshops on the priorities defined in the New Agenda. The need to implement these priorities for the economic recovery and development of Africa will thus proceed from the stage of pious hopes to that of reality. These seminar-workshops should be organized in close cooperation with the Organization of African Unity and the African subregional economic communities: the Economic Community of West African States, the Economic Community of Central African States, the Southern African Development Community,

the PTA — Preferential Trade Area for Eastern and Southern African States — and the Maghreb Arab Union.

We hardly wish to delude ourselves. The New Agenda will not succeed unless adequate resources are mobilized and unless the international community complies with its commitments and the United Nations system plays its role correctly. For its part, Africa should continue its reforms and ensure the effective functioning of the follow-up mechanism for monitoring and evaluation of the New Agenda.

The end of the cold war and the prospects of building a more effective and efficient United Nations in the sphere of economic and social development gives us hope that the New Agenda will engender conditions favourable for development and peace in Africa.

Africa has the right and the duty to enter into the twenty-first century on an equal footing and not through a side door, as it would appear from the present situation, which we all deplore and which, together, we must all resolutely correct.

Mr. Mwakawago (United Republic of Tanzania): I should like, at the outset, to express my delegation's support for the statement made by Ambassador Slaheddine Abdellah of Tunisia, who spoke on behalf of the African countries, and for the intervention of Ambassador Ramtane Lamamra of Algeria, who spoke on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. Tanzania also expresses sincere appreciation to Japan for its support for African development.

I wish also to pay special tribute to you, Mr. President, for the exceptional interest that you have taken in this agenda item on the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s.

For more than 30 years aid and assistance have been poured into Africa, with seemingly little effect. Many recipients have become trapped in a damaging cycle of dependence. This state of affairs can no longer be tolerated or sustained. More effective development tools must be found urgently. More visible results must be achieved rapidly, and, as a first step, the scope and mechanisms that have yielded results elsewhere in the past must be expanded.

At the thirteenth special session of the General Assembly, which ended in June 1986, the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development was adopted unanimously, and since then the General Assembly has expressed continuing concern about the pace of progress.

By the end of the 1980s it was evident that the African economic crisis had deepened and that much more vigorous efforts on the part of the international community were necessary. With the establishment of Africa as one of the five priorities of the United Nations in the 1990s, thought was given to the intergovernmental mechanisms that would have to be created to give new direction to the international support that African countries needed so badly. It was on the basis of these premises that the United Nations, at its forty-sixth session, unanimously adopted the New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s. The New Agenda was expected to act as a catalyst, giving political impulse and strength to the other activities within and outside Africa.

The diversification of African economies provides a major way out of dependence on the exporting of commodities and its related problems and contributes to the development of more dynamic and resilient economies. While such diversification is primarily the responsibility of the African countries themselves, the international community recognizes that additional resources will be required to support the continent's diversification programmes, including the establishment of a specific fund to address the problem of their pre-investment stage.

With regard to Africa's commodity exports, the international environment remains hostile. Falling prices have depressed the export earnings of African countries, notwithstanding increased volumes. Huge cuts in imports have thus become necessary. In domestic terms, African production has encountered insurmountable obstacles, including poor weather, wars and civil unrest, as well as macroeconomic imbalances. In 1993 these circumstances combined to reduce the rate of growth to a meagre 1.5 per cent. Imports of agricultural, fishery and forestry products expanded by 26 per cent, to $10,000 billion, as a result of the effects of drought on crop production in the region. Africa, having been a region with a reasonable balance of trade in agricultural, fishery and forestry products, is now in a position of substantial deficit.

For example, in my country — Tanzania — agriculture dominates the economy, providing a livelihood for 80 per cent of the economically active population, and it accounts for 50 per cent of gross

domestic product and 75 per cent of foreign exchange earnings. The principal export crops are still coffee, cloves, cotton, tea, cashew nuts, sisal and tobacco. Subsistence farming accounts for about 50 per cent of total agricultural output. It is estimated that 8 per cent of the land is currently under cultivation and that, of this, about 3 per cent is irrigated.

In the industrial sector, Tanzania relies on the processing of local commodities and on the manufacture of goods for import substitution. The principal industries are still food processing, textiles, brewing, cigarettes and tourism. The industrial sector grew at a modest annual rate of 4.2 per cent between 1965 and 1980, but it declined by 2.4 per cent during the period 1980-1990, owing mainly to rising energy costs and insufficient foreign exchange to purchase raw materials, machinery and spare parts. An economy such as that of Tanzania's is both fragile and inflexible and, therefore, demands both vertical and horizontal diversification to make it viable and sustainable.

The implementation of structural adjustment programmes, however favourable their medium-term and long-term impact is likely to be, has not taken place without social stress, social disruption and political risks. The reduction in the levels of per capita consumption and of imports have had social costs — in particular, for health care, education, nutrition, employment and the maintenance of social institutions. Despite the agreement, under the Programme of Action, to deal urgently with commodity issues, taking into account the special interests of African countries, no additional efforts were made to undertake measures aimed at stabilizing, at reasonably remunerative levels, the earnings from those commodities and minerals that are of primary interest to Africa.

The decrease in overall performance was therefore accounted for in part by the unsatisfactory export situation. Trade gains fell below expectations in many key commodity areas, and Africa suffered a decline in market share.

The conclusion of the Uruguay Round of multilateral trade negotiations has not offered Africa any prospect of better terms of trade. In fact, the final text imposes many obligations with regard to market access and stricter regulations in certain areas, such as agriculture, market protection, textiles and clothing.

Following renegotiation of the tariff reductions granted under the generalized system of preferences and the Lomé Convention, the reductions offered by the major export markets for African countries led to preferential-margin reductions of 28.2 per cent, 40.2 per cent and 15.7 per cent in the cases of the European Union, Japan and the United States respectively. African countries will certainly suffer an erosion of the preferential margins for most of their major exports. This will result in the loss of comparative advantage and, therefore, in a drop in market share and a consequent decline in export earnings.

For African countries, agricultural products based on natural resources represented a major source of revenue. However, according to the final text of the Uruguay Round, preferential margins will decrease by 60 per cent under the generalized system of preferences and 16 per cent under Lomé IV. It is obvious that the African economies are not flexible enough to enter this new multilateral trade structure unless there is a concerted effort by the international community to extend preferential terms.

The negotiations on the establishment of a diversification fund for Africa's commodities were carried over from the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly. After protracted negotiations last year it was decided that consideration of the item should be extended into the resumed forty-eighth session and, finally, into the forty-ninth session.

It is my delegation's conviction that our partners have had the opportunity to consult with their capitals, with each other and with the relevant institutions, including the Common Fund and the African Development Bank, in exploring ways to establish a mechanism through which funds could be made available for diversification programmes.

Taking into account the urgency of the matter, my delegation would also like to call upon multilateral financial and trade institutions to commit adequate resources to meet the needs of the new fund. On our part, Tanzania hopes to establish national diversification councils, in conformity with resolution 48/214, which will create the necessary momentum in the efforts to diversify our economies.

The States participants in the African Development Fund, which is under the auspices of the African Development Bank, are invited to make an initial special contribution, in the amount of $50 million to $75 million over a period of three years, to finance the preparatory phase of the commodity-diversification programme in Africa.

May I conclude by urging our development partners to extend the necessary support to the draft resolution on the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s and the issue of the commodity diversification fund so that it will be adopted by the Assembly, thus making it possible for the diversification programmes to begin without further delay.

Mr. Gambari (Nigeria): My delegation fully supports the statements made by the representative of Algeria, on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, and by my colleague the representative of the current Chairman of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) in the debate on the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s. In expressing that support, we would also like to make some remarks from a national standpoint.

The United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development 1986-1990 prepared the ground for a fruitful dialogue between Africa and the international community on possible approaches to coming to grips with the region's socio-economic and developmental problems. Unfortunately, the international community failed to live up to its promise, which is why the New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s was subsequently negotiated and adopted.

The programme of the New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s has yet to fructify. Under General Assembly resolution 48/214, which launched the New Agenda for the Development of Africa, the detailed follow-up action and monitoring machinery set forth in it was designed to ensure that Africa would be at the centre of the international community's focus and attention through the 1990s. This, unfortunately, has not yet come to fruition either.

Africa's economy is essentially agrarian and very dependent on the production of agricultural commodities for the survival of the continent's teeming populations and for earning scarce foreign currency. Therefore, African countries should continue to exert their best efforts to diversify their economies. However, agricultural commodities tend to attract low prices in the world market, which becomes a disincentive to the sustaining of such efforts. The continent therefore needs international support for its development; hence, the call for establishing and placing in operation a diversification fund for Africa's commodities, which would make it possible to put in place the measures required to support Africa's own efforts in this direction.

Following the 1980s, which for us in Africa has been described as the "lost decade", our continent continues to be confronted with critical socio-economic problems which deserve the very urgent attention and support of the international community. A recent survey of economic and social conditions in the continent indicates that after the loss of the development momentum achieved in the 1980s, and in spite of the rigorous application of structural adjustment programmes by most African countries, socio-economic hardships in Africa have become more severe, and we have yet to achieve self-sustaining economic growth and development.

Africa's low commodity prices and crushing external-debt burden are the principal factors responsible for the continent's poor economic performance. The growth rate of Africa's economic output has, unfortunately, continued to decline: from a high of 3.1 per cent in 1990, to 2.3 per cent in 1991, to 1.5 per cent in 1992 and to a mere 1.4 per cent in 1993. As we approach the end of 1994, the situation is still not encouraging. In the context of this dismal picture, vast amounts of resources must now be mobilized, particularly from external sources, in order to enhance the programme of economic recovery, growth and development before the close of the 1990s.

As we urge the international community to support the economic challenges facing Africa, it is important to emphasize that we are referring to a significant and a sizeable portion of the globe, inhabited by nearly 600 million people spread through its 52 countries, a continent which is also endowed with a considerable share of the world's natural and mineral resources but which earns only 1 per cent of its wealth. At a time when most African nations have adopted painful but necessary economic reform and adjustment programmes and when African countries are intensifying their efforts in the promotion of subregional and continent-wide economic cooperation and economic integration, Africa is a continent ravaged by poverty and marginalized in the area of world trade.

We acknowledge that the conclusion of the Uruguay Round and the signature of the Uruguay Trade Agreement at Marrakesh, Morocco, in April of this year is an important landmark in international cooperation in the promotion of free trade among the countries and regions of the world. However, there is fear that the new world trade agreement that we have to realize, and which was signed in our continent, will not in fact, in the

foreseeable future, benefit the African continent. This is an additional reason why we believe that the international community, through the Programme of Action of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s, should as a matter of priority take into account the need to implement, in both the short and long term, a strategic plan for the diversification of Africa's commodity and other exports.

Nigeria, like other developing countries, believes that it is the primary responsibility of national Governments to develop strategies to improve socio-economic growth and thereby enhance the living conditions of their people. Nigeria and other African countries regard the Programme of Action of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s as a compact between them, on the one hand, and the international community, on the other, to help to build their respective national capabilities and capacities. In this connection, we will welcome the establishment of the national diversification councils in conjunction with the provision of a diversification fund.

Finally, as the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s illustrates, Africa needs the immediate and urgent commitment of the international community in the form of increased financial resources. This cannot be overemphasized. We also believe that the involvement of the United Nations system, along with the collaboration and cooperation of multilateral financial institutions, is indispensable in assisting us to meet the urgent challenges of African development.

Agenda item 8

Adoption of the agenda and organization of work:

Letter from the Chairman of the Committee on Conferences (A/49/351/Add.1)

The President (*interpretation from French*): I should like to draw the Assembly's attention to document A/49/351/Add.1, which contains a letter dated 8 December 1994 addressed to the President of the General Assembly by the Chairman of the Committee on Conferences. As members are aware, the Assembly, in paragraph 7 of resolution 40/243, decided that no subsidiary organ of the General Assembly should be permitted to meet at United Nations Headquarters during a regular session of the General Assembly unless explicitly authorized by the Assembly.

As indicated in the letter I have just mentioned, the Committee on Conferences has recommended that the General Assembly authorize the Trust Committee of the United Nations Fund for Namibia to meet in New York during the forty-ninth session of the General Assembly.

May I take it that the General Assembly adopts the recommendation of the Committee on Conferences?

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 12.55 p.m.

United Nations A/49/PV.88

General Assembly
Forty-ninth Session

Official Records

88th Meeting
Wednesday, 14 December 1994, 3 p.m.
New York

President: Mr. Essy ..... (Côte d'Ivoire)

In the absence of the President, Mr. Ansari (India), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3.30 p.m.

Agenda item 154 *(continued)*

United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s: draft resolution (A/49/L.44)

Mr. Badji (Senegal) *(interpretation from French)*: Our debate today devoted to the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s is one of particular importance inasmuch as it awakens our collective conscience to the serious economic situation on that continent.

The consideration of this question gives us the opportunity, on the eve of the fiftieth anniversary of this prestigious Organization, to reflect on one of the fundamental principles of the United Nations Charter, which commits all Member States to combined efforts to promote economic growth in the world, particularly in developing countries.

Further, the Organization's medium-term plan for the period 1992-1997 has identified, among the five global priorities, the one relative to the economic recovery of Africa. Yet we have to note, with regret, that the gap in development between the countries of the North and those of the South is widening year after year, while the economic situation of Africa is steadily deteriorating and has now reached disquieting, indeed alarming, proportions.

Africa's external debt recorded an increase of 2.4 per cent and is now about $285.4 billion. The proportion of the exports of our continent that this debt represents increased from 287.4 per cent in 1993 to 288.9 per cent nowadays.

Although the volume of African exports has increased by 8 per cent, receipts, in fact, dropped by 0.2 per cent and levelled out at $74.3 billion in 1993, having decreased by 5.4 per cent in 1991 and by 1.7 per cent in 1992. This may appear to be a paradoxical situation, but it is explained by the fact that the unitary value of African exports fell by 7.5 per cent.

Another worrying paradox is that, although the unitary value of African imports dropped by 2.1 per cent, their value increased by 1.3 per cent and is now in the area of $75.9 billion, notably on account of the 3.5 per cent increase in their volume.

Analysis of these statistics shows that this situation is due to the triple phenomenon of a 5.5 per cent deterioration in the terms of trade in Africa, the increasingly dangerous accumulation of debt in that continent and the resulting reduction, in real terms, in the flow of its resources. This finding is quite indicative of the need to consider adequate measures and concrete action to sustain agricultural production, on which African economies largely depend.

Such support comes through — among other measures — diversification of these economies and the

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establishment of a successful and fairly remunerative system of basic commodities. It is therefore fortunate that the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s should devote particular attention to this objective by envisaging the creation of a diversification fund for basic commodities.

In addition, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the African Development Bank are equally of the opinion that the creation of such a fund would tend to boost agricultural production in Africa, with a double, positive impact on economic growth and on food security in the countries of that area. Indeed, the existence of opportunities within the framework of Amsterdam joint fund is often cited as a means of meeting this need, but an objective analysis of the functioning of that fund has shown its operational limits.

For all these reasons the delegation of Senegal thinks that draft resolution A/49/L.44 of 30 November 1994, which was presented on behalf of the President-in-office of the Organization of African Unity by the Permanent Representative of Tunisia, is an initiative that deserves our unanimous support.

This is why, in associating ourselves fully with the statement of the Permanent Representative of Tunisia and with the statement of the Permanent Representative of Algeria on behalf of the Group of 77, we appeal to all delegations present here to support draft resolution A/49/L.44, when the time comes for a decision, by adopting it without a vote.

Mr. Gervais (Côte d'Ivoire) *(interpretation from French):* I should like at the outset to endorse what my Tunisian and Algerian colleagues have said. They spoke back to back as the representatives of the countries of the Organization of African Unity and of the Group of 77 and China.

The economic situation of African countries in this period before the turn of the century is indeed highly alarming. For three decades now the United Nations has tried ceaselessly to find solutions to the problems of development in general and those facing Africa in particular. Now, in the context of the New Agenda for the Development of Africa, the establishment of a diversification fund has been proposed. The purpose of the fund is to diversify African economies and thereby make them less vulnerable and to eliminate the hazards of the raw materials markets.

The exercise on which we have embarked, following the adoption of resolutions in this connection, implied the cooperation of the developed countries of the North. My delegation in particular saw in it a further opportunity to demonstrate the international solidarity that Africa needs for the promotion of a modern economy harnessed to the global economy. Moreover, this exercise was designed to strengthen cooperation with our partners through, on one hand, existing structures and instruments and, on the other hand, the creation of new conditions advantageous to African economies.

In addition, the peoples of our respective countries hoped that this programme with the title "United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s", together with its corollary the fund on diversification of Africa's commodities, would indeed come into being and that our partners would join.

My country, Côte d'Ivoire, which has for the last 34 years been engaged in great efforts to diversify its economy and in the follow-up to those efforts, is aware of the positive effects that such a fund could have on African economies. In this spirit, my delegation hoped our partners would be receptive to our concerns. The lengthy consultations held by African delegations, in conjunction with the discreet and effective contacts made by the current President of the General Assembly, bear witness to Africans' interest in this new programme, which is fully endorsed by the African Development Bank.

Côte d'Ivoire is aware that such machinery, the implementation of which all African countries consider indispensable, will require financial decisions on the part of our partners. But is this too much to ask for the building of something that will last, such as what has been proposed, especially when it is clear that the tragedies and tensions spawned by poverty and destitution in our continent call for enormous sacrifices by our partners, sacrifices in the context of humanitarian operations and sacrifices gladly accepted by the large countries of the North?

My delegation feels that the time has come to ask the international community to resolutely tackle the African continent's real problems of underdevelopment by providing the right solutions. We are convinced that the proposed diversification fund is an invitation to invest in the harmonious development of our continent and, by extension, in peace. To this end I wish to invite delegations here to lend their full backing to the draft

resolution on the diversification fund now being discussed. In our view, there is no existing structure that justifies the reluctance we have seen here. As studies have shown, the existing structures complement the proposed fund and, in any event, could not possibly take its place. We therefore invite the General Assembly to adopt the draft resolution to be submitted on this subject.

The President: In accordance with General Assembly resolution 2011 (XX), of 11 October 1965, I now call on the Observer of the Organization of African Unity.

Mr. Djomatchoua Toko (Organization of African Unity): Once again the Assembly is considering the implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s (UN-NADAF), the successor to the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development 1986-1990 (UNPARED).

When the UN-NADAF was adopted by the General Assembly at its forty-sixth session, it was expected to carry on the unfinished work of UNPARED, which was a commitment by the international community to assist African countries in their efforts for economic recovery and development. The UN-NADAF represents faith in Africa and its people to build their own future and faith in the world community to give its support to that endeavour. In this programme the international community has accepted the principle of shared responsibility and full partnership with Africa and the responsibility and commitment to give full and tangible support to African efforts.

We note with satisfaction that a number of initiatives have been undertaken by the Secretary-General and the members of the international community to address Africa's economic development problems. However, we cannot but underscore at this point that the advancement of the larger implementation of this programme still remains very unsatisfactory three years after its adoption, mainly because of the lack of political will.

During this period, the economic situation in Africa has deteriorated further. Africa is the only region of the world which has continued to experience stagnation and decline since 1980. The crisis in food and agricultural production has yet to be resolved. The industrial share of gross domestic product has not increased satisfactorily, and the production structure of most African countries has remained highly skewed, with little connection with the global industrial system. Besides, external trade has provided little stimulus to growth in African economies, and Africa's share of total world exports has declined steadily from 4 per cent in the 1980s to 1.4 per cent in the 1990s. The flow of official development assistance has declined in real terms since 1990. In current prices, flows of official development assistance fell from $19.7 billion in 1990 to $12.1 billion in 1992. In addition, the region's external debt, which was a mere $48.3 billion in 1978, rose to the uncomfortable level of $285 billion in 1993.

The UN-NADAF is almost halfway through its life-span. In a rapidly changing international economic environment, there is an urgent need for the international community to translate its commitment into concrete action in order to reverse the current economic trend in Africa. In the context of the UN-NADAF, African Governments have themselves taken several measures with the aim of achieving the objectives of the programme in the shortest possible time. Their political and economic reforms have had far-reaching effects on existing political and economic structures and their peoples' way of life. However, it is clear that these efforts must be effectively complemented in timely fashion by the international community in order to instal the engine of development in African economies.

I would like to stress at this point that the Organization of African Unity has been at the forefront of the development effort in Africa. A major move by the OAU was the establishment of the African Economic Community in 1991. This represents an important economic strategy that is complementary to strategies for accelerated and sustainable development of African countries. In addition, the OAU has established a conflict-resolution mechanism to cope with the recurrent conflicts within and between African countries and has helped create an environment of peace and security more conducive to democracy and economic development.

In view of these efforts by African countries and organizations, there is an urgent need for effective cooperation by the international community in the following areas.

First, there is the need for diversification of African commodities, which is a prerequisite for economic recovery and growth. The diversification of commodities represents the initial step by which the foreign-exchange earnings of African countries could be stabilized and increased. The international community should assist African countries with additional funds that would enable

them to carry out pre-investment and implementation projects. In this context, it is important that current negotiations on the establishment of a diversification fund be expedited.

Secondly, foreign debt constitutes another major cog in the wheel of development for many African countries. In resolution 46/151, on the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s, specific reference is made to the cooperation of the international community. The international community has attempted to deal with this problem essentially through global debt strategies. However, the specific, serious case of African countries has yet to receive an adequate solution. There is therefore an urgent need to evolve a credible strategy for the reduction of debt burden and the enhancement of the financial capacity of African countries.

Thirdly, at a time when the foreign-exchange earnings have fallen for most African countries, especially during the past decade, financial assistance for development has, ironically, also declined or has served as a reversing force in the major economic reforms undertaken by many African countries. The call for increased financial support for African development is well articulated in many United Nations resolutions. What is required is greater political will from the international community. Increases in real-resource inflow, especially in concessional financing and grants, are very critical to the recovery of African economies. In addition, increases in investments are highly desirable, since they will make a considerable difference in the productive sectors of the African economies.

Fourthly, in an increasingly competitive world economy the tendencies towards the marginalization of the African economies should not be allowed to become more pronounced. The adverse position of African countries in the international economy has not been made easy in the recently concluded Uruguay Round. The projected loss in the volume of trade and earnings for African countries is very important. Adequate compensatory measures are thus called for to mitigate the impact of this loss. In this context, it is important that adequate measures are taken to strengthen the relevant unit within the United Nations Secretariat to allow it to provide the necessary support and visibility of the programme's needs.

These are just a few well-known areas for international cooperation for Africa's development. Further inaction by the international community would mean not only the aggravation of poverty in Africa but also a defeat for envisaged global development *ab initio*.

The President: We have heard the last speaker in the debate on this item.

The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 154.

Agenda item 40 ***(continued)***

Question of Palestine

(a) Report of the Secretary-General (A/49/636)

(b) Draft resolutions (A/49/L.53, L.54, L.55, L.56)

The President: Members will recall that the General Assembly concluded its debate on this agenda item at its 72nd meeting, on 30 November.

I now call upon the Acting Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People to introduce draft resolutions A/49/L.53 to L.56.

Mr. Remírez de Estenoz Barciela (Cuba), Acting Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People (*interpretation from Spanish*): On behalf of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, I have the honour to introduce draft resolutions A/49/L.53, L.54, L.55 and L.56. These texts all refer to the question of Palestine and have been drafted in the light of recent developments in the peace process, which the Committee has welcomed and supported.

At the outset, allow me to announce that Egypt, Malaysia and the United Arab Emirates have become sponsors of draft resolutions L.53, L.54 and L.55 and that Djibouti, Egypt, Malaysia, the United Arab Emirates and Zambia have joined the sponsors of draft resolution L.56.

The first three draft resolutions (A/49/L.53, L.54 and L.55) give mandates to the Committee, the Division for Palestinian Rights and the Department of Public Information to undertake a programme of work in their fields of competence while taking current developments into consideration.

In draft resolution L.53, the Assembly welcomes the signing of the Declaration of Principles as well as the subsequent implementation agreements, including the

Agreement on the Gaza Strip and the Jericho Area of 4 May 1994. The Assembly reaffirms that the United Nations has a permanent responsibility with regard to the question of Palestine until the question is resolved in all its aspects in a satisfactory manner in accordance with international legitimacy.

The General Assembly also considers that the Committee has the duty and, indeed, can continue to make a valuable and positive contribution to international efforts to promote the effective implementation of the Declaration of Principles and to mobilize international support and assistance to the Palestinian people during the transitional period. The Assembly endorses the recommendations of the Committee contained in its report and requests the Committee to continue to keep under review the situation relating to the question of Palestine and to report and make suggestions to the General Assembly or to the Security Council, as appropriate. It also authorizes the Committee to continue to exert all efforts to promote the exercise of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, to make such adjustments in its programme of work as it may consider appropriate and necessary in the light of developments, and to give special emphasis to the need to mobilize support and assistance for the Palestinian people and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its fiftieth session and thereafter. The Assembly also requests the Committee to continue to extend its cooperation to non-governmental organizations and to take the necessary steps to involve additional non-governmental organizations in its work.

In draft resolution L.54, which deals with the work of the Division for Palestinian Rights of the Secretariat, the General Assembly considers that the Division continues to make a useful and constructive contribution through the organization of seminars and meetings of non-governmental organizations, as well as through its various informational activities, and requests the Secretary-General to continue to provide the Division for Palestinian Rights with the necessary resources in accordance with existing mandates and as provided for in the current budget.

Regarding the draft resolution in document A/49/L.55, negotiations have been continuing over the past few days and, as a result of these negotiations, I should like to make the following oral revisions.

First, paragraph 2 should be replaced by the following text:

> "Considers that the special information programme on the question of Palestine of the Department of Public Information helps to raise the awareness of the international community on the question and the situation in the Middle East in general, including the achievements of the peace process, and should continue to contribute effectively to an atmosphere conducive to dialogue and supportive of the peace process."

Secondly, the phrase "and in particular the achievements of the peace process" should be added at the end of paragraph 3 (b).

In this draft resolution, on the activities of the Department of Public Information, the General Assembly also

> "requests the Department, in full cooperation and coordination with the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, to continue, with the necessary flexibility as may be required by developments affecting the question of Palestine, its special information programme on the question of Palestine for the biennium 1994-1995, with particular emphasis on public opinion in Europe and North America", (*A/49/L.55, para. 3*)

as provided for in the current budget.

Draft resolution A/49/L.56 is entitled "Peaceful settlement of the question of Palestine". In it, the General Assembly reaffirms the necessity of achieving a peaceful settlement of the question of Palestine, the core of the Arab-Israeli conflict, in all its aspects; expresses its full support for the ongoing peace process, which began in Madrid, and the Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements; expresses the hope that the process will lead to the establishment of a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the Middle East; and calls for the timely and scrupulous implementation of the agreements reached between the parties towards the negotiation of the final settlement.

In the draft, the General Assembly stresses the need for the realization of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, primarily the right to self-determination, and for the withdrawal of Israel from the Palestinian territory occupied since 1967. It also stresses the need for resolving the problem of the Palestine refugees in conformity with General Assembly resolution 194 (III) of 11 December 1948; urges Member States to

expedite the provision of economic and technical assistance to the Palestinian people during this critical period; emphasizes the importance for the United Nations to play a more active and expanded role in the current peace process and in the implementation of the Declaration of Principles; and requests the Secretary-General to continue his efforts with the parties concerned, and in consultation with the Security Council, for the promotion of peace in the region and to submit progress reports on developments in this matter.

The draft resolutions I have just introduced were formulated with a firm resolve to contribute to the current peace process and to make real progress towards a comprehensive, just and lasting solution to the question of Palestine. A number of delegations have been consulted in the drafting of these texts, which represent the view of the majority of the members of the international community on the question of Palestine.

On behalf of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian people, and in the conviction that it is now necessary not only to maintain but also to reinforce our solidarity with the Palestinian people, I invite delegations to reaffirm their support for this objective and constructive approach by voting in favour of the proposed draft resolutions.

The President: I should like to inform members of a correction to paragraph 6 of draft resolution A/49/L.54. The penultimate line of that paragraph should read as follows:

> "in cooperation with the Permanent Observer Mission of Palestine to the United Nations."

We shall now proceed to consider draft resolutions A/49/L.53 to A/49/L.56.

A number of representatives wish to speak in explanation of vote before the voting. May I remind delegations that explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. Krause (Germany): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union, Austria, Finland and Sweden.

When the General Assembly dealt with this item last year, we stated that the signing of the Declaration of Principles had created a new political context for the activities of the Committee on the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian people, the Division for Palestinian Rights and the Department of Public Information of the Secretariat. In our view, the time had come to end the confrontation and conflict of the past and to open up new avenues for the peaceful coexistence of the Israelis and the Palestinians.

Although some progress has been made in that direction during the past few months, we still think that there is a strong need to adapt the three aforementioned organs to better reflect the progress achieved in the peace process. Therefore, the European Union has made some concrete and constructive suggestions to this end. To our regret, the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) was not in a position to take those suggestions into account at this stage. Therefore, the European Union will abstain in the voting on draft resolutions A/49/L.53 and A/49/L.54. However, we have taken note with satisfaction of the fact that the PLO has declared its readiness for early negotiations with the European Union with the aim of adapting the mandates of the three organs to the new developments of the peace process.

The European Union expresses its hope that those negotiations will be conducted in a flexible and constructive manner and that they will yield positive results. We will review our position on resolutions 49/69 A to C during the fiftieth session of the General Assembly in the light of the results achieved during those negotiations.

The European Union welcomes the substantial and positive changes made in draft resolution A/49/L.56, entitled "Peaceful settlement of the question of Palestine". These changes, which to a large degree reflect concerns of the European Union, will enable us to vote unanimously in favour of this draft resolution.

Mr. Parker (United States of America): My Government is unable to support the four draft resolutions — A/49/L.53, A/49/L.54, A/49/L.55 and A/49/L.56 — which have been introduced under agenda item 40, "Question of Palestine".

Draft resolutions A/49/L.53, A/49/L.54 and A/49/L.55 are artifacts of an earlier time, largely unchanged in their focus and purpose from years past. They have been overtaken by events on the ground in the Middle East. These draft resolutions promote institutions and activities whose approach to the question of Middle East peace is unbalanced and outdated. They do not

support the process of negotiation now under way directly between the parties concerned. They do not contribute to a spirit of reconciliation in the Middle East.

This would be sufficient cause for concern were it not that these institutions and activities absorb financial and human resources that could be put to better use in another way. The international community has clearly stated its support for assisting the Palestinians in building the necessary economic infrastructure and social services. We believe that the General Assembly should consider carefully whether the activities supported by these resolutions represent the most effective use of United Nations resources in support of Palestinian needs. We believe that these resources would be better spent in support of the Palestinian Authority and the Palestinian people.

One way to do this would be to assist the Special Coordinator in the occupied territories. Mr. Larsen has only a handful of people to assist him in his vital job of stimulating Palestinian economic development. My Government strongly advocates transferring resources from the unproductive activities and committees authorized in these draft resolutions to the Special Coordinator's vitally productive efforts.

Draft resolution A/49/L.56, entitled "Peaceful settlement of the question of Palestine", speaks conclusively to issues that are at this moment under direct negotiation between parties in the region. As a co-sponsor of the Madrid peace process, my Government believes that it is inappropriate and unhelpful for the General Assembly to take a position on issues that are now under direct negotiation by the parties, in a process to which they have given their solemn agreement. At this important moment, we want to support that process of negotiation, rather than focusing on issues or statements that divide and polarize.

The United States supports the achievement of a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the Middle East. To our regret, the lack of balance in the draft resolution before us obviates their usefulness for the achievement of that objective. We will vote against them, and we invite others to do the same.

Mr. Jacob (Israel): Since September 1993, Israel and the Arabs have made historic steps forward in the peace process. Major developments included the signing by Israel and the PLO of the Declaration of Principles on 13 September 1993, and the subsequent Agreement on the Gaza Strip and the Jericho Area, signed in Cairo on 4 May 1994 and the Agreement on Preparatory Transfer of Powers and Responsibilities, signed on 29 August 1994. On 14 September 1993, Israel and Jordan signed the agreed common agenda which led to the subsequent Washington Declaration, signed on 25 July 1994, and culminated in the signing of the Israeli-Jordanian peace treaty on 26 October 1994. In addition, bilateral and multilateral negotiations continue, and we look forward to progress on all tracks of the peace process.

We had hoped that at its forty-ninth session the General Assembly would respond to the new realities in the Middle East by changing and eliminating obsolete resolutions drafted at the height of the Arab-Israeli conflict. Regrettably, this has not happened. The draft resolutions before us do not reflect the new realities, nor do they reflect our hopes for a better future. Rather, they recycle old language and ideas which have hindered, rather than helped, efforts to bring about peace in our region.

Draft resolution A/49/L.53 endorses and authorizes the work of the "Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People". Draft resolution A/49/L.54 does the same with regard to the Division for Palestinian Rights of the Secretariat. Israel has opposed the existence of these bodies since their inception. They have obstructed dialogue and understanding through a one-sided and distorted portrayal of the Arab-Israeli conflict. Indeed, they stand in contradiction to the very principles upon which the peace process is based. In addition, these bodies expend valuable resources which should be devoted to more constructive activities, such as supporting social and economic development that would benefit Palestinians.

Draft resolution A/49/L.55 requests the Department of Public Information to, among other things, disseminate information on all activities of the United Nations system relating to the question of Palestine. We believe that this too is a needless expenditure of valuable resources which could be put to better use.

Draft resolution A/49/L.56, while somewhat changed, remains essentially the same as the resolution adopted last year. Like resolution 48/158 D, it attempts to predetermine the outcome of the negotiations on issues relating to permanent status, in contradiction to the Declaration of Principles. And, like the previous resolution, draft resolution A/49/L.56 is fraught with internal contradictions. On the one hand, it claims to support the peace process which began in Madrid. On the other hand, it attempts to undermine the fundamental

principle of direct negotiations without preconditions, upon which the Madrid process is based. We believe that Member States that claim to support the peace process have a responsibility to oppose this draft resolution, as it strikes at the essential principles on which the process is based.

Accordingly, Israel will vote against the draft resolutions under this agenda item. We encourage others who support the peace process to do the same.

The President: The Assembly will now take decisions on draft resolutions A/49/L.53 to A/49/L.56.

We turn first to draft resolution A/49/L.53, entitled "Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People".

We shall now begin the voting process. A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour: Algeria, Antigua and Barbuda, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Cyprus, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Djibouti, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Fiji, Gabon, Ghana, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jamaica, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Singapore, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Suriname, Swaziland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against: Israel, United States of America

Abstaining: Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Marshall Islands, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Tajikistan, The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

Draft resolution A/49/L.53 was adopted by 103 votes to 2, with 40 abstentions (resolution 49/62 A).*

The President: We now turn to draft resolution A/49/L.54, entitled "Division for Palestinian Rights of the Secretariat".

We shall now begin the voting process. A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour: Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Cyprus, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Djibouti, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Fiji, Gabon, Ghana, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jamaica, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Singapore, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Suriname, Swaziland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against: Israel, United States of America

Abstaining: Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Marshall Islands, Monaco,

Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Tajikistan, The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

Draft resolution A/49/L.54 was adopted by 105 votes to 2, with 40 abstentions (resolution 49/62 B).*

The President: We turn next to draft resolution A/49/L.55, as orally revised, entitled "Department of Public Information of the Secretariat".

A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour: Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Djibouti, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Singapore, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against: Israel, United States of America

Abstaining: Georgia, Russian Federation, Tajikistan

Draft resolution A/49/L.55, as orally revised, was adopted by 142 votes to 2, with 3 abstentions (resolution 49/62 C).*

The President: We turn next to draft resolution A/49/L.56, entitled "Peaceful settlement of the question of Palestine".

A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour: Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Djibouti, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Singapore, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against: Israel, United States of America

Abstaining: Belarus, Georgia, Marshall Islands, Russian Federation, Tajikistan, Uruguay, Uzbekistan

Draft resolution A/49/L.56 was adopted by 136 votes to 2, with 7 abstentions (resolution 49/62 D).*

The President: Before calling on the first speaker in explanation of vote after the vote, I remind delegations that explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. Samadi (Islamic Republic of Iran): My delegation voted in favour of the draft resolutions contained in documents A/49/L.53, L.54 and L.55. However, I would like to express my delegation's reservations concerning all parts of the draft resolutions that might be construed as any form of recognition of Israel.

My delegation did not participate in the vote on draft resolution A/49/L.56, since we believe that the recent agreements will not lead to the full restoration of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people.

Mr. Amer (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) (*interpretation from Arabic*): Draft resolutions A/49/L.53 to L.56, which the Assembly has just adopted, adequately cover the needs of the Palestinian people and will be conducive to support for all efforts towards that people's exercise of its rights. That is why we voted in favour of the draft resolutions.

We wish, however, to put on record our reservations with regard to the contents of the said resolutions that could be construed as recognition of what is known as Israel or welcome for the ongoing peace process, as we believe that that process does not provide the desired just, comprehensive and final solution to the Palestinian problem or to other problems of the Middle East.

My delegation wishes to reiterate that the resolution of the question of Palestine could be achieved only through the implementation of the many resolutions adopted by the United Nations which the international community continued to reaffirm over the past four decades. We believe that those United Nations resolutions provide the most appropriate framework for a just, comprehensive solution that would enable the Palestinian people to exercise all its legitimate inalienable rights, including the right to return to its homeland and to exercise self-determination.

The events of the recent past have shown that the efforts of the international community have helped in resolving the problem of South Africa which was similar, in many ways, to the Palestinian problem, and have enabled the people of South Africa to establish a united, non-racial and democratic State. This continues to be a model upon which the Palestinian problem could be solved through the establishment of a democratic State in Palestine wherein Arabs and Jews may live as equals.

Mr. Al-Attar (Syrian Arab Republic) (*interpretation from Arabic*): My delegation voted in favour of draft resolution A/49/L.56, entitled "Peaceful settlement of the question of Palestine". That positive vote does not imply that we are either in favour of or against the Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements and other agreements signed by Israel and Palestine, to which reference is made in the ninth and tenth preambular paragraphs and in operative paragraph 3 of the draft resolution.

Mr. Hasan (Iraq) *(interpretation from Arabic):* My delegation would like to express its reservations concerning the wording of the third preambular paragraph of the draft resolution in document A/49/L.53, and the wording of the fifth preambular paragraph of the draft resolution in document A/49/L.55.

The President: In accordance with General Assembly resolutions 3237 (XXIX) of 22 November 1974 and 43/177 of 15 December 1988, I now call on the Observer of Palestine.

Mr. Al-Kidwa (Palestine): Let me express our deep appreciation to all Member States that voted in favour of the draft resolutions that have just been adopted under agenda item 40, "Question of Palestine". I wish to convey special thanks to Member States that sponsored those draft resolutions, and to all members of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People.

With the adoption of those draft resolutions, the Assembly sends the proper message to the parties by reaffirming the commitment of the international community to a just and peaceful settlement of the question of Palestine, the core of the Arab-Israeli conflict, and by affirming the role of the United Nations in this regard. By doing so, the Assembly contributes positively to the creation of a better atmosphere in the region and strengthens the position of all those who believe in international legitimacy and the principles of international law and who are effectively seeking a lasting and comprehensive peace in the Middle East.

We had hoped that these draft resolutions, and other draft resolutions relevant to the question of Palestine,

especially those that reaffirm the rights of the Palestinian people, including their right to self-determination, would be adopted by consensus in the light of the new situation in the area, for change should take place in both directions if it is to be genuine and realistic. Unfortunately, achieving consensus was not possible, and this has basically been due to what we view as a wrong Israeli approach, one that expects the Palestinian side to give up its inalienable rights and positions in advance and expects the United Nations to give up its own responsibilities towards the question of Palestine as well — all in return for the beginning of the peace process.

Let us recall that the peace process on the Palestinian-Israeli track is still at the beginning, and furthermore deals with a transitional period. The agreement to postpone negotiations on the final settlement issues does not and should not detract from the Palestinian positions of principle on those issues, and it certainly does not and should not result in a decrease in the responsibilities of the United Nations in this regard.

No one should say that the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and those of international law and international humanitarian law, as well as Security Council resolutions, are irrelevant at any time or in any place. No one should tell the General Assembly to give up its position, enshrined in those principles. Such calls will mean the real prejudging of the outcome of the negotiations through the acceptance of the imbalance of power and the illegal de facto situations that have already been created by the Israeli side. Further, actions illegal under international law remain illegal, and do not become less illegal with the beginning of negotiations.

We had hoped for a more balanced position in the General Assembly on the part of the co-sponsors of the peace process, away from partisan support for one side or, on the other hand, from unjustified changes in position at the expense of the Palestinian people. We firmly believe that the successful development of the peace process requires, among other things, more balanced and objective positions to be taken by each of the two co-sponsors and by them together.

We do believe that the peace process has achieved important progress. We also believe that we at the United Nations have done our best to support that process and to reflect the new realities the way they are. We are sure that the international community and the United Nations will always shoulder their responsibilities in respect of the question of Palestine until a final settlement is effectively reached. Let us only hope that the parties concerned will adhere to their contractual obligations and implement the agreements reached without further delays and difficulties.

Finally, we would like to express our thanks to all Member States with which we have worked to produce what we believe to be a very good and useful package of draft resolutions, which has received overwhelming support in the Assembly. We are satisfied with today's results and we are proud of that support.

The President: The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 40.

Agenda item 8 (*continued*)

Adoption of the agenda of the forty-ninth regular session of the General Assembly and allocation of items: reports of the General Committee

Sixth report of the General Committee (A/49/250/Add.5)

The President: The sixth report of the General Committee concerns two requests for the inclusion in the agenda of the current session of additional items submitted, respectively, by the delegation of Namibia and by a number of countries.

I first draw the attention of representatives to paragraph 1 (a) of the report. The General Committee recommends the inclusion in the agenda of the current session of an additional item entitled "United Nations Fund for Namibia: scholarship programme for Namibian students".

May I take it that the General Assembly decides to include this additional item in its agenda?

It was so decided.

The President: In paragraph 1 (b) of the report, the General Committee recommends that the item be considered directly in plenary meeting.

May I take it that the General Assembly adopts this recommendation of the General Committee?

It was so decided.

The President: May I take it that, as requested by the sponsor, this item should be given priority consideration by the Assembly because of its urgent character?

It was so decided.

The President: Next, I should like to draw the attention of representatives to paragraph 2 (a) of the report.

The General Committee recommends the inclusion in the agenda of the current session of an additional item entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Caribbean Community".

May I take it that the General Assembly decides to include this additional item in its agenda?

It was so decided.

The President: In paragraph 2 (b) of the report, the General Committee recommends that the item be considered directly in plenary meeting. May I take it that the General Assembly adopts this recommendation of the General Committee?

It was so decided.

Postponement of date of recess

The President: I should like to draw the attention of members to a matter relating to the date of recess.

Members will recall that at the 3rd plenary meeting, on 23 September 1994, the General Assembly decided that the forty-ninth session should recess on 20 December 1994 and close on 18 September 1995.

However, I am informed that some Main Committees will complete their work later than originally scheduled. Therefore, the Assembly will not be able to conclude its work on 20 December. I should like, therefore, to propose to the Assembly that it postpone its date of recess until Friday, 23 December 1994.

If there is no objection, may I take it that the Assembly agrees to this proposal?

It was so decided.

Programme of work

The President: Before adjourning the meeting, I should like to make the following announcement.

As members know, the General Assembly is now preparing to conclude its work for the year. In this connection, I should like to inform members of the programme of work from now until Friday, 23 December, the day on which the Assembly will recess, as decided this afternoon.

On Thursday, 15 December, in the morning, the Assembly will first consider agenda item 19, "Admission of new Members to the United Nations". Next, the Assembly will take up the second report of the Credentials Committee, under agenda item 3 (b). The Assembly will then consider agenda item 32, "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity".

On Thursday, 15 December, in the afternoon, the Assembly will first take up agenda item 14, "Report of the International Atomic Energy Agency", in order to take action on the draft resolution submitted under that item. The Assembly will next consider the reports of the First Committee.

On Friday, 16 December, in the morning, the Assembly will first take up agenda item 38, "The situation in the Middle East", to consider the draft resolutions submitted under that item. The Assembly will then take up sub-item (h) of agenda item 17, "Appointment of the members of the Consultative Committee on the United Nations Development Fund for Women", followed by agenda item 18, "Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples", in order to take action on draft resolutions A/49/L.51 and A/49/L.52.

The last agenda item scheduled for the morning of Friday, 16 December, is item 42, "The situation in Central America: procedures for the establishment of a firm and lasting peace and progress in fashioning a region of peace, freedom, democracy and development", so that the Assembly may take action on the draft resolution submitted under that item.

On Monday, 19 December, in the afternoon, the Assembly will first consider the agenda item on the "United Nations Fund for Namibia: scholarship

programme for Namibian students". The Assembly will then take up the reports of the Second Committee.

On Tuesday, 20 December, in the morning, the Assembly will first take up agenda item 37, "Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance", in order to consider and take action on the remaining resolutions submitted under this item.

The Assembly will next take up agenda item 7, "Notification by the Secretary-General under Article 12, paragraph 2, of the Charter of the United Nations".

Then, the Assembly will consider the agenda item on "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Caribbean Community".

Lastly, on Tuesday, 20 December, in the morning, the Assembly will take up agenda item 46, "Declaration of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity on the aerial and naval military attack against the Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya by the present United States Administration in April 1986".

Finally, on Friday, 23 December, in the morning, the Assembly will consider the reports of the Third Committee.

In the afternoon of Friday, 23 December, the Assembly will consider the reports of the Fifth Committee.

The programme of work of the General Assembly for the remainder of December will be issued tomorrow in document A/INF/49/5/Add.4.

The scheduling of agenda items pending consideration by the Assembly will be announced in due course.

The meeting rose at 4.45 p.m.

Annex

Changes in recorded and/or roll-call votes

Resolution 49/62 A

Subsequent to the voting, the delegation of Angola advised the Secretariat that it had intended to vote in favour.

Resolution 49/62 A, B, C and D

Subsequent to the voting, the delegations of Afghanistan, Burundi and the Sudan advised the Secretariat that they had intended to vote in favour; the delegation of Uzbekistan had intended to vote in favour of resolution 49/62 D.

United Nations A/49/PV.89

General Assembly

Forty-ninth Session

Official Records

89th Meeting
Thursday, 15 December 1994, 10 a.m.
New York

President: Mr. Essy ..... (Côte d'Ivoire)

The meeting was called to order at 10.30 a.m.

Agenda item 19

Admission of new Members to the United Nations

Application for admission (A/49/679)

Letter from the President of the Security Council (A/49/722)

Draft resolution (A/49/L.58)

The President (*interpretation from French*): I should like to invite the General Assembly to consider the positive recommendation by the Security Council (A/49/722) on the application of the Republic of Palau for admission to membership in the United Nations.

In addition to the countries listed in document A/49/L.58, the following countries have become sponsors of that draft resolution: Antigua and Barbuda, Belgium, Cape Verde, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Finland, Greece, Guatemala, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Luxembourg, Malta, Mauritius, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia and Zimbabwe.

We shall now consider draft resolution A/49/L.58 on the admission of the Republic of Palau to membership in the United Nations.

May I take it that the General Assembly accepts the recommendation of the Security Council and adopts draft resolution A/49/L.58 by acclamation?

Draft resolution A/49/L.58 was adopted (resolution 49/63).

The President (*interpretation from French*): I therefore declare the Republic of Palau admitted to membership in the United Nations.

I request the Chief of Protocol to escort the delegation of the Republic of Palau to its place in the General Assembly Hall.

The delegation of Palau was escorted to its place in the General Assembly Hall.

The President (*interpretation from French*): It is my pleasure on this historic occasion to welcome, on behalf of the General Assembly, the Republic of Palau as a full Member of the United Nations. I congratulate the Republic of Palau and I congratulate the United Nations on the admission of its 185th Member State.

I wish the Government and people of Palau peace, prosperity, happiness and every success for the future. I wish to assure Palau of the full support of the United Nations as it takes its rightful place in the international community as a free, independent, sovereign and peace-loving State.

94-87464 (E)

This record contains the original text of speeches delivered in English and interpretations of speeches delivered in the other languages. Corrections should be submitted to original speeches only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned, *within one month of the date of the meeting*, to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Section, Room C-178. Corrections will be issued after the end of the session in a consolidated corrigendum. When the result of a recorded and/or roll-call vote is followed by an asterisk, see annex to the record.

I now call on the representative of Guinea, who will speak on behalf of the Group of African States.

Mr. Dione (Guinea) (*interpretation from French*): At a time of uncertainty and upheaval in other aspects of international relations, we are happy today to welcome the Republic of Palau into the great family of Member States of the United Nations. I am very pleased, on behalf of the African States Members of the United Nations, to congratulate this new State and welcome it most warmly. Once again our Organization has proved that with every day that passes it is moving towards universality, which is one of its major goals.

The Republic of Palau has a long, rich and diverse history and is a country of many cultures, customs and traditions. Nevertheless, it has taken over 200 years for the inhabitants of Palau to be allowed to become masters of their own destiny. In proclaiming their sovereignty on 1 October 1994, the people of Palau gave tangible proof that all countries, large or small, rich or poor, see their destiny as intimately linked to the noble purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter. We are therefore convinced that Palau's entry into the United Nations will enrich our Organization by further increasing its diversity, because, let us never forget, a civilization encompassing all peoples must be a marriage of all the different civilizations, living in harmony. In this regard, as in other fields, the Republic of Palau has many political, economic and strategic advantages. In the realization of the noble objectives of peace and cooperation between all States, the Republic of Palau can expect the African States Members of the United Nations to be ready to cooperate closely with it on all matters of common interest.

I could not conclude without asking the delegation of Palau to pass on to the people and Government of Palau the hope of the African Group in New York that Palau's cooperation with the United Nations and its Member States will be fruitful and benefit all peace-loving and justice-loving nations.

The President *(interpretation from French)*: I call on the representative of Singapore, who will speak on behalf of the Group of Asian States.

Mr. Chew (Singapore): On behalf of the Member States of the Asian Group, I have the honour and privilege of congratulating the Republic of Palau on its admission as the 185th Member of the United Nations. I should also like warmly to welcome Palau to this Organization. The admission of Palau, which was until recently a Trust Territory of the United States, strengthens the principle of universality, upon which the United Nations is based, and which is an important principle for its effective functioning.

The Republic of Palau encompasses an area of some 178 square miles and has a small population, but it is a significant producer of phosphate, canned fish and agricultural produce. In the last few years we have seen a number of small countries, mainly from Europe, admitted to the United Nations. Today I am particularly pleased to welcome a small State from the Pacific region to the United Nations family.

Although small States, especially island States like Palau, are especially vulnerable because of their size, their small population and narrow economic base, there is reason to be optimistic about their growth prospects and their viability. The experience of many small countries has shown that, with hard work and far-sighted policies, they can succeed and prosper. However, for their efforts to succeed, the international community has an equal responsibility to assist them. In this regard, I am confident that Palau's membership in the United Nations will enable it to benefit from the assistance that the United Nations and its specialized agencies can offer.

On its part, Palau will undoubtedly contribute to the work and purposes and principles of the United Nations. The Member States of the Asian Group and other Members of the United Nations as a whole will extend their cooperation to Palau and will work closely with it.

The President *(interpretation from French)*: I call on the representative of Hungary, who will speak on behalf of the Group of Eastern European States.

Mr. Nathon (Hungary): In my capacity as Chairman of the Group of Eastern European States for this month, I have the honour and the privilege to welcome, on behalf of the members of the Group, the Government and people of Palau on the occasion of that country's admission to the United Nations.

The admission of a new State is always a demonstration of how the principle of the universality of the United Nations is being furthered. It also demonstrates that all the principles and values embodied in the Charter remain in effect. The broad membership can enhance cooperation between Member States to promote within the framework of the United Nations such

noble ideals as peace, freedom, justice and economic and social development.

The Group of Eastern European States, many of whose members are also small States, are especially pleased to welcome Palau into the international community. We are convinced that membership will provide the people of Palau with new perspectives and opportunities in the international arena and within the family of the United Nations.

We are today witnessing a rapid change in our Organization. The United Nations is becoming increasingly involved in resolving political conflicts, fostering economic and social development and ensuring respect for human rights. All Member States, regardless of their size, bear their own responsibilities in this endeavour.

We are certain that the Republic of Palau, as a new Member State of the United Nations, will participate actively in the work of our Organization. I can assure the delegation of Palau that the members of the Eastern European Group will be reliable partners. We look forward to working with the Republic of Palau to achieve the noble objectives of the United Nations.

The President *(interpretation from French)*: I call on the representative of Saint Lucia, who will speak on behalf of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States.

Mr. Odlum (Saint Lucia): The accession of Palau to the General Assembly of the United Nations is a fitting moment for the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States to muse somewhat on the question of size and sovereignty. The Group comprises countries which are as diverse in culture as they are in size and resources. This diversity was celebrated as recently as last weekend, at the Summit of the Americas. All the diversity of the Americas burst out into a new spirit of freedom: freedom to speak, regardless of size; freedom to participate in the processes of justice, humanity and ecological preservation, regardless of size.

Today we welcome Palau into the United Nations, an institution which traditionally respects not size and resources, but the right of every people, every speck of dust, to participate in the human process of living, expressing views, debating ideas and arriving at the warm glow of consensus. There is a particular significance in the accession of Palau. The significance lies in the fact that Palau, a tiny but strategically located, island in the West Pacific, north of Indonesia, with a population of about 16,000 struck a vibrant cord of dissent in 1982. This small American-administered island held up an agreement for a compact of free association because of the creeping fear that Palau would become a repository for nuclear materials.

Towards the middle of the 1980s, the United States had clearly begun to pay far more attention to the strategic importance of its Micronesian holdings as bases for use against Soviet threats and for the testing of strategic missiles. This year, at the sixty-first session of the Trusteeship Council, the President of the Republic of Palau was able to report confidently that there was full agreement between the United States and Palau on the Compact of Free Association. A plebiscite was taken, and even the challenges of concerned interests in the courts attest to the fact that democracy is alive and well in Palau.

The cessation of the cold war has changed the theatre of possibilities that now face the people of Palau, and they can now participate in this forum for free expression, to pursue not only their right to dissent, but also the self-development of their people in the international community.

In the new spirit of international cooperation, the Administering Authority itself must be commended for painstakingly taking this Territory through the paces of trusteeship and preparing this small nation to take its place among the nations of the world.

The Latin American and Caribbean Group warmly welcomes Palau to this distinguished body. We welcome it as it joins this forum, not only to seek a better economic and social advantage for the people of Palau, but to share in the search for truth and sustaining values, and to do so in a spirit of tolerance and freedom of inquiry.

The President *(interpretation from French)*: I call on the representative of Spain, who will speak on behalf of the Group of Western European and Other States.

Mr. Yañez-Barnuevo (Spain) *(interpretation from Spanish)*: On behalf of the Group of Western European and Other States, and also of course on behalf of Spain, it is a source of special pleasure for me to express to the Government and people of the Republic of Palau our heartiest congratulations on Palau's admission as a Member State of the United Nations.

The event that we are celebrating today has especial significance for our Organization and for the full realization of the purposes and principles of the United Nations as set forth in its Charter.

Indeed, the decision just adopted by the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the Security Council, is a fitting conclusion to an important chapter in the history of the Organization, a history that was written by the Trusteeship Council.

Furthermore, the admission of the Republic of Palau, which brings to 185 the number of States Members of the Organization, represents one more step that our Organization has taken towards the full realization of the principle of universality, thereby highlighting the importance of the contribution of all States to the strengthening of the role of the United Nations in international peace and security, and in the economic and social development of all peoples.

We are fully convinced that the Republic of Palau will make a positive contribution to the realization of the purposes and principles set forth in the United Nations Charter. On behalf of the Group of Western European and Other States, I wish to assure the Republic of Palau of our fullest cooperation in this common undertaking, and to extend to it our best wishes for success in its new role as a Member of the United Nations.

The President *(interpretation from French)*: I call on the representative of the United States, the host country.

Mr. Inderfurth (United States of America): In my capacity as representative of the host country, I should like to extend very warm congratulations to the Republic of Palau as it becomes the newest Member of the United Nations family. As the former Administering Authority of the Republic of Palau under the Trusteeship Agreement, the United States was particularly pleased to have sponsored today's resolution and is particularly gratified by the Republic of Palau's acquisition of United Nations membership.

The adoption of the resolution by which the General Assembly decided to admit the Republic of Palau to the United Nations is a recognition of Palau's sovereignty and independence, and its readiness to take its place in the community of nations. The resolution also marks the successful conclusion of the work of the Trusteeship Council, which, since its establishment, has brought self-determination to the peoples of Trust Territories in all corners of the world.

We look forward to working with the representatives of the Republic of Palau, who, I am sure, will bring a fresh perspective that will benefit this Organization and all its Members as we work to advance the goals of a peaceful and prosperous international community.

Once again, to President Nakamura and his delegation here with us today, and to all the people of Republic of Palau, we say: Welcome to the United Nations.

The President *(interpretation from French)*: I call on the representative of Australia, who will speak on behalf of the South Pacific Forum.

Mr. Rowe (Australia): I have the honour to address the Assembly in Australia's capacity as current Chair of the South Pacific Forum and on behalf of the nine member States of the Forum which are also Members of the United Nations, namely, the Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Marshall Islands, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, Western Samoa and Australia.

The resolution which the General Assembly has just adopted, admitting the Republic of Palau to membership of the United Nations, is a historic one. It is also one which the Member States of the South Pacific Forum warmly welcome.

The General Assembly's action today follows the Security Council's decision on 10 November 1994 that, in the light of the entry into force on 1 October 1994 of the new status agreement for Palau, the objectives of the Trusteeship Agreement had been fully attained, and that the applicability of the Trusteeship Agreement with respect to Palau had terminated. That decision was followed by the unanimous adoption by the Security Council, on 29 November, of its resolution 963 (1994) recommending that Palau be admitted to membership of the United Nations.

The Security Council's decision to terminate the Trusteeship Agreement was the final stage in the process set in train following the act of self-determination by the people of Palau on 9 November 1993, when they chose to enter into a Compact of Free Association with the United States.

The positive developments that have occurred recently in Palau, in particular the exercise by the people of their right to self-determination, have been followed with close interest and with the full support of the Member States of the South Pacific Forum.

We congratulate the people of Palau on their decision to enter into the Compact of Free Association with the United States. We also wish to congratulate the United States for successfully discharging its obligations under the trusteeship arrangements and for advising the Security Council of the entry into force, on 1 October 1994, of the Compact of Free Association.

We also wish to express our appreciation to the Trusteeship Council for the role that it has performed in support of the exercise by the people of Palau of their right to self-determination and for fully discharging its obligations to Palau under the United Nations Trusteeship System.

Palau, as a country in the Pacific region, already has very close ties with the other Member States of that region. The strength of the relationships that exist was demonstrated by the large attendance at the independence celebrations, on 1 October this year, by representatives from countries from the Asia-Pacific region and by representatives of the United Nations, the South Pacific Forum and the South Pacific Commission.

We are confident that these relationships will continue to develop and grow stronger now that Palau has embarked upon a new path as an independent country and as a Member of this family of nations. The countries of the South Pacific, some of which were former Trust Territories that also gained their independence under the United Nations Trusteeship System, are committed to cooperating closely with Palau as it sets out on this new and exciting journey.

We wish the people of Palau success and prosperity in the future as members of the international and regional community.

Today, we welcome the Republic of Palau most warmly as a Member of the United Nations.

Address by Mr. Kuniwo Nakamura, President of the Republic of Palau

The President (*interpretation from French*): The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Republic of Palau.

Mr. Kuniwo Nakamura, President of the Republic of Palau, was escorted to the rostrum.

The President (*interpretation from French*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I have great pleasure in welcoming the President of the Republic of Palau, Mr. Kuniwo Nakamura, and inviting him to address the Assembly.

President Nakamura: I wish to thank Chargé d'affaires Dione, Chairman of the Group of African States; Ambassador Chew, Chairman of the Group of Asian States; Ambassador Nathon, Chairman of the Group of Eastern European States; Ambassador Odlum, Chairman of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States; Ambassador Yañez-Barnuevo, Chairman of the Group of Western European and Other States; Ambassador Inderfurth of the United States of America; and Ambassador Rowe of Australia for their words of welcome. I also wish to thank the members of the General Assembly for voting to admit the Republic of Palau as the 185th Member of the United Nations.

My country, with approximately 20,000 citizens, will be one of the smallest Members of this Organization, but we are large in the things that count: a strong cultural heritage; a commitment to human rights and a democratic government; resources - both human and marine - which we are particularly proud of; and, most of all, the support and friendship of our brothers and sisters in the international family of nations.

This event today in part celebrates Palau's status as an independent and sovereign nation and its admission as a Member of the United Nations. In that, of course, we take great pride. Our day of independence, 1 October 1994, and this first day of membership in the United Nations are the beginning of a new future for us, as a people and as a nation. At last, after over a century of

foreign administration, we control our own destiny and we are again a member of the international community of nations.

Today also represents the end of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, for which the United Nations established the Trusteeship System after the Second World War. Indeed, this marks symbolically the end of that War. The noble goals of the Trusteeship System — to further international peace, promote the advancement of the peoples of the Trust Territories and encourage respect for human rights — have been accomplished. As the Head of State of the last Trust Territory, I offer sincere thanks to all the Members of the United Nations, particularly the members of the Trusteeship Council. Together, we can celebrate a victory for the principle of self-determination and the idea that stronger nations can help others overcome devastation and destruction to recover their nationhood and identity. Thus, the admission to membership in the United Nations of its last Trust Territory is a celebration for that body itself. As that last Trust Territory, we are proud simply to be a participant, and we salute each and every Member of the Organization.

We are sincerely grateful for the assistance and guidance of the United Nations, together with the United States of America as Administering Authority, during the past 50 years of trusteeship. Even as I speak to this Assembly today, we are nearing completion of a three-year project to develop a master plan for sustainable development in Palau, which has been jointly sponsored by the United Nations Development Programme and the United States of America.

We have already taken a historic step forward in our relationship with the United States by implementing the Compact of Free Association. Our relationship with the United States has always been, and will continue to be, solidly based on mutual friendship, respect and trust. Now we take another historic step forward in our relationship with the United Nations by moving from our status as a Trust Territory to that of a full-fledged fellow Member.

We are eager to develop and strengthen our relations with each Member of the United Nations and the international community. We understand that with our new political status come new responsibilities. We seek friendship with all nations and pledge to abide by the rules of international law. We desire close cooperation with our neighbours in areas of mutual concern and pledge to preserve and protect our shared marine resources. We ask our neighbours to recognize our international borders and we pledge to recognize theirs. We invite the world to visit and do business with Palau, accepting our laws and respecting our traditions, and we pledge to treat our visitors fairly as we welcome them to our productive and growing country.

Palau's journey to this point has not always been easy. Through rough waters and turbulent weather Palau has steadily sailed towards sovereignty and self-determination. We have been steered by the guiding rudder of our unique cultural values and propelled by the strong winds of progressive democratic principles. I am extremely pleased that, this morning, Palau has brought to the United Nations representatives of our traditional and elected leadership.

Palau's young constitutional democracy is now stronger and more stable than ever before. We are unified in our desire to build our country, to provide for the education and health of our people and to maintain our balanced national budget while reducing government and encouraging the private sector. We in Palau must now focus on building economic self-sufficiency, which is an essential component of true sovereignty. Our funding is limited and must be used and invested wisely to meet our nation's long-term goals.

Our natural resources are our best foundation for developing a strong economy. Our rock islands are unique and beautiful. Our seas are pristine and maritime resources abundant. Palau has been rated one of the seven underwater wonders of the world and one of the most desirable diving locations in the world. Therefore, in our Declaration of Independence, signed on 1 October 1994, we pledged to preserve our marine environment as a living treasure, not just for ourselves and our future generations, but for the entire planet and, in return, we know that Palau is not travelling alone in its effort to develop a truly long-lasting and sustainable economy. We now are a Member of the United Nations and can act together with our fellow brothers and sisters in the international family of nations.

The lessons we have learned from our history are the importance of our people and of our cultural traditions, the need to resolve conflicts peacefully and the fact that we must work together to sustain our planet for future generations. These ideas are, of course, central to the Charter of the United Nations. We hope that we can contribute to international cooperation and communication among all nations, working to enhance the lives of our

people today and tomorrow so that they may live together in peace and without the scourge of war.

I and the other representatives of my country believed it was important to be here today so that, before this Assembly, we could reaffirm the declaration we made in our application for membership in the United Nations. We declare our acceptance of the obligations set forth in the Charter of the United Nations and our commitment to fulfil them.

In coming to Palau, our ancestors sailed bravely into the unknown. They needed courage, skill and cooperation simply to survive. Now, we too will also need these same qualities as we voyage forward into an unknown future. With the determination of our ancestors as an example, with unity as a people, and with faith in Almighty Providence, I know that we will create a great island nation for future generations of Palauans and an energetic member of the community of nations.

The President *(interpretation from French)*: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Republic of Palau for the statement he has just made.

I should like to announce that the flag of the Republic of Palau will be raised at a ceremony that will take place in front of the delegates' entrance at 1 p.m.

Mr. Kuniwo Nakamura, President of the Republic of Palau, was escorted from the rostrum.

Mr. Mwaungulu (Malawi), Vice-President, took the Chair.

Agenda item 3 *(continued)*

Credentials of representatives to the forty-ninth session of the General Assembly

(b) Second report of the Credentials Committee (A/49/517/Add.1)

The President: The draft resolution recommended by the Credentials Committee appears in paragraph 10 of its second report (A/49/517/Add.1). We shall now take action on that recommendation.

The Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 49/4 B).

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (b) of agenda item 3?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 32

Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity

Report of the Secretary-General (A/49/490)

Draft resolution (A/49/L.43)

The President: I call on the representative of Guinea to introduce draft resolution A/49/L.43.

Mr. Dione (Guinea) *(interpretation from French)*: I have the honour and privilege to address the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session on behalf of the Group of African States on this notable draft resolution on the subject of cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity.

Since the agreement of 15 November 1965 that launched cooperation between the two organizations, the questions of mutual interest that they have addressed have included many political, economic, social and cultural problems of fundamental importance for Africa's accelerated sustainable development.

Agreements on cooperation that have flowed from various resolutions of the General Assembly have in large part had a considerable positive impact on the development process in Africa. This is clearly reflected in the development activities carried out in the five subregions of Africa by specialized agencies and other bodies of the United Nations system, including the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the United Nations Population Fund and the World Health Organization, to name but a few of those playing an important catalytic role in the promotion of African development.

It gives me genuine pleasure also to reaffirm that cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity (OAU) was central in

bringing about the recent downfall of apartheid and the establishment of a democratic system in South Africa.

Yet, in the present circumstances, it is no secret that the development level of most African countries is low, and that the continent continues to have the largest number of least-developed countries. The poor overall economic performance of the majority of African countries is exacerbated by their grave impairment in terms of political development. Political tension continues to dominate many African countries; when poorly handled, these situations often lead to large-scale conflicts.

Draft resolution A/49/L.43 is based on the firm hypothesis that agreements on cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity are very important to promote the continent's economic growth and development. The text has the usual preambular and operative parts.

The preambular part consists of 13 paragraphs which, *inter alia*, recall the legal basis of the draft resolution and past efforts on the international, regional and national level to solve Africa's development problems. The preambular part also highlights Africa's fundamental political and economic-development problems.

The operative part contains 25 paragraphs dealing, *inter alia*, with political and economic questions where cooperation with the United Nations is of particular importance. Among the main points of the operative part are those relating to, first, United Nations assistance to the Organization of African Unity to strengthen its conflict resolution capacity, in particular in the areas of establishment of an early warning system, the creation of machinery for preventive diplomacy, the training of African peace-keepers, logistical and financial support for OAU peace-keeping operations, and the establishment of logistical centres in Africa; secondly, United Nations support for the functioning of the African Economic Community and other African economic groups, to the extent that the strategies of those groups supplement national strategies for the promotion of economic growth and sustainable development; thirdly, coordination of the regional programmes of United Nations agencies in order to create interlinkages among them while ensuring the harmonization of their programmes with those of the African regional and subregional economic organizations; fourthly, the adoption by the United Nations of appropriate measures to ensure the speedy implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s, in particular in the areas of resource flows, debt relief and diversification of African economies; and, fifthly, the framework agreement by the United Nations on the necessary and appropriate economic, financial and technical assistance to refugees and displaced persons as well as to African countries of asylum.

Let me conclude by stressing that African countries continue to pin great hopes on the ability of the United Nations, through these agreements on cooperation, to transform despair into optimism in Africa, to free our countries from the yoke of underdevelopment, and to transform poverty into wealth. But all of this depends on the diligence with which the draft resolution is implemented.

Mr. Abdellah (Tunisia) (*interpretation from French*): I have the honour to speak today on behalf of the Organization of African Unity (OAU).

Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity is of crucial importance for the promotion of both regional and international peace and development. Since its establishment, the pan-African organization has benefitted greatly from cooperation with the United Nations, especially in the areas of decolonization, the struggle against apartheid, security and economic and social development. Today more than ever Africa needs this cooperation to be further strengthened and calls for greater interest on the part of the entire international community.

Following the Tunis summit, African Foreign Ministers met in New York on 29 September 1994. They stressed the need for sustained efforts, especially within the United Nations system, to support the activities of African countries to overcome their difficulties.

The conflicts that assail several regions of Africa are a major challenge and a grave concern for us all. African Heads of State or Government are convinced that constructive dialogue in the framework of preventive diplomacy can help defuse crises before they break out and are determined to shoulder their responsibilities for the maintenance of peace on the continent; hence, they have decided to establish a mechanism for the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts in Africa. Since it began to function, this mechanism has interceded on a number of occasions and has proved to be most useful for the maintenance of peace in our continent. But experience has shown that effective support from the international community will be necessary to make that mechanism

more effective and to enable it fully to attain its objectives.

In this regard, cooperation between the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the United Nations would be particularly valuable. Here, we welcome the fruitful collaboration between the two organizations with a view to preserving security and stability in Burundi and Rwanda. The efforts of both to bring the situation in these two countries back to normal deserve to be continued and supported.

In this context, the refugee problem continues to be a source of instability in the region, necessitating more concerted action to find a lasting solution. In this connection, we believe that it is essential to continue to encourage national reconciliation in both countries and to strengthen cooperation between the United Nations and the OAU.

We hope that the regional conference on assistance for refugees in the Great Lakes region will take place as soon as possible. This conference should facilitate the preparation of a strategy for international cooperation and a plan of action to deal with the problem of refugees in the region.

Elsewhere, we should like to salute the efforts of the OAU and the United Nations that led to the peace processes in Mozambique and in Angola.

Furthermore, we take this opportunity to draw attention to the need to strengthen cooperation between the OAU and the United Nations with a view to settling the conflicts in Somalia and Liberia. The difficulties being encountered by these two countries are hindering progress towards peace. Therefore, there is a need for increased efforts. I refer not only to diplomatic efforts to bring the parties to the conflict together in the interests of securing a peaceful solution but also to the need for greater financial and logistical assistance. Such assistance is essential if the African forces of the Military Observer Group of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOMOG), together with the United Nations Observer Mission in Liberia, are to continue their mission for the maintenance of peace in Liberia.

Economic and social development is also an area in which cooperation between the United Nations and the OAU is fundamental to helping the African continent meet the challenges it is confronting in this respect. Poverty, debt, desertification, the very limited diversification in commodities, unemployment, refugees and obstacles to sustainable development are equally difficulties that require close cooperation between the two organizations. Here, United Nations action should be aimed at giving priority to Africa's concerns, at giving momentum to the role of the international community and at coordinating the activities of various international bodies and organizations in this field.

Forthcoming international meetings — in particular, the World Conference for Social Development, to be held in Copenhagen, and the Fourth World Conference on Women, to be held in Beijing — will be promising opportunities to promote further cooperation between the United Nations and the OAU in these areas and, thereby, complement and deepen the coordination between the two organizations in the implementation of the strategies, plans of action and principles adopted at the Vienna Conference on Human Rights, at the Rio Summit and at the Cairo Conference on Population and Development.

Thus far, the effective implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s has come up against difficulties. Notwithstanding proposals and initiatives in this regard — especially with respect to the creation of a fund for the purpose of diversifying commodities and resolving the debt problem — the results recorded to date fall far short of our expectations. Today, it is essential that we combine our efforts and alert the international community to the urgent need for effective implementation of the United Nations Programme for the Development of Africa and for promotion of the support it requires.

Under this heading, as the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of Africa emphasized at their most recent meeting, held in New York, better coordination between the Bretton Woods institutions and those of the United Nations, in full association with the OAU, would be extremely beneficial in promoting the programme for Africa's development. Besides, these same Ministers said that it is imperative that a high-level department, in addition to the existing coordination mechanism for Africa, be established to ensure the underpinning and implementation of programmes that meet the concerns of Africa in the area of development and programmes such as those presented in the New Agenda.

Furthermore, and taking into account the new international economic problems facing Africa, economic integration within the framework of the African Economic Community and the strengthening of the commercial capacity of each country are prerequisites for

assured sustainable development. In this regard, the United Nations and the specialized agencies must redouble their efforts to facilitate complementarity between the economies of African countries and to allow for the growth and diversification of their exports through specific programmes of technical assistance and steps to maintain awareness of the need to mobilizing financial resources to this end.

In the same perspective, we should like to reiterate the proposal made by President Ben Ali, the current Chairman of the OAU, who advocated

> "the preparation of a global economic and social plan whose goal would be to safeguard Africa's development on a sound and lasting basis and to help our continent make up for its deficiencies, become integrated in the world economy and ensure the conditions necessary to enable all the people of the continent to lead a dignified life."

This plan, which requires close cooperation between the United Nations and the OAU, should have as its objective the strengthening of Africa's own capacities through the mobilization of financial resources, the intensification of technical assistance and the consolidation of industrialization, to be achieved through partnership, direct investment, trade and research with a view to finding a solution to the problem of debt.

I should like, in conclusion, to pay tribute to the United Nations Secretary-General for the work he is doing to strengthen cooperation in all areas between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity. We hope that Africa will enjoy the effective support of everyone that it truly deserves.

Mr. Kamunanwire (Uganda): My delegation expresses its appreciation to the Secretary-General for his report (A/49/490) on cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity (OAU). We thank all Governments, organizations and Agencies and Programmes of the United Nations system, as well as the financial institutions, for their continued cooperation with the OAU and with individual African countries. We endorse the statement made by the representative of Tunisia, who spoke on behalf of the OAU.

In the face of rapid changes on the international scene and the various challenges confronting Africa, African countries are convinced that solidarity and cooperation with each other, on the one hand, and with the international community, on the other hand, are needed now more than ever before. After the political liberation of the continent, Africa is now resolutely taking up the remaining challenges, including putting an end to the endemic civil wars on the continent, with their attendant effects of influxes of refugees and displaced persons; socio-economic development, for which the realization of an integrated pan-African Economic Community is a commendable first step; and ensuring the democratization of political and economic institutions and respect for human rights. The OAU mechanism for conflict prevention, management and resolution and the Treaty establishing the African Economic Community provide appropriate frameworks in this regard.

The establishment of and commitment to the OAU mechanism for conflict prevention, management and resolution is indeed a testimony to the seriousness of Africa and its resolve to face the challenges of peace. In all efforts on the ground, cooperation with the United Nations and other peace-loving partners remains crucial. For their part, States Members of the OAU have vowed to contribute all in their power for the successful operationalization and implementation of this Mechanism. Areas in which external assistance will be vital are logistical support and development of the requisite capacity for conflict prevention and resolution, including adequate financial resources for African peace-keepers and their equipment and training and the establishment of an early warning system for preventive diplomacy. Equally important is the need for the United Nations and its appropriate organs to cooperate and consult with the OAU and its Member States on decisions relating to the maintenance of international peace and security in Africa.

Efforts under way in Africa for economic development have a better chance of success if progress is also made in integrating the economies of the region. The need for regional economic integration derives from the realization that the comparatively small size of Africa's economies constitutes a serious handicap to their performance in an increasingly competitive international market. Yet Africa's potentials cannot be underestimated. That is why the entry into force of the Treaty establishing the African Economic Community in May this year, complemented by similar regional initiatives, such as the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Maghreb Union, presents a great opportunity not only for Africa but also for our development partners. We therefore call for increased support for the successful implementation of the Treaty

so that African economies are well and fairly integrated into the overall world economy, with increased benefits for us all.

Financial flows to Africa have been steadily declining. If Africa is to sustain the momentum of its difficult economic reform processes, this trend should be reversed, and developed countries will need to ensure adequate increases in external financial resources and debt-relief measures for the continent. According to available figures, Africa's declining access to funds stands in contrast to the surge in lending to the developing countries overall. Moreover, Africa's financial trends run contrary to the recommendations of the "United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s" (UN-NADAF), adopted by the Assembly in December 1991. For Africa's growth rates to rise sufficiently to set the continent on a course of economic recovery, the "New Agenda" estimated that the continent would need aid levels significantly higher than those prevailing at the end of the 1980s.

We call on the United Nations to ensure the effective and successful implementation of the UN-NADAF, especially with regard to adequate resource flows, debt-relief measures and the diversification of African economies. In this respect, there should be strengthened coordination in the Secretariat in order to monitor and follow up these efforts. In our view, the establishment of a high-policy-level office specifically to monitor the implementation of UN-NADAF would be appropriate. With regard to the diversification of African economies, we remain convinced of the need for the establishment of a distinctive diversification facility within the African Development Bank with a fund put aside especially for African commodity diversification.

On external debts, allow me to repeat the following statement made by my Foreign Minister during the general debate at this session of the General Assembly:

> "For economic reforms to succeed in our countries, all creditors, including multilateral institutions, should adopt enhanced measures that go beyond debt-rescheduling in order to bring about a substantial reduction in our total stock of debt. Such measures should include substantial debt cancellation or conversion into grants and/or other innovative schemes such as the use of reserves, a new issue of special drawing rights and debt swaps. In this regard Uganda endorses the conclusion of the recent Jakarta Non-Aligned Movement Ministerial Meeting on 'Debt and Development: Sharing of Experiences' and the recent proposal by the British Chancellor of the Exchequer on measures to resolve the debt problem of the poorest countries." (*Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-ninth Session, Plenary Meetings, 26th meeting, pp. 4-5*)

Mr. Sy (Senegal) (*interpretation from French*): This is an important date in the annals of our Organization. My delegation wishes to reiterate the congratulations offered by the Chairman of the African Group to the Republic of Palau on its admission as the one hundred and eighty-fifth Member State. We also want to express our determination to cooperate with that country's delegation to the United Nations in the friendliest, most efficient and most loyal way possible.

This historic event happily coincides with our debate on agenda item 32, entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity".

For almost 30 years, the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity have developed, in an exemplary spirit of political partnership, a fruitful and dynamic cooperation aimed at promoting the creation in Africa of lasting conditions for peace, security and socio-economic development. In that regard, the delegation of Senegal particularly welcomes the important progress achieved towards those objectives.

Certainly, one of the most significant results, particularly given its historical importance, is the return of South Africa to the concert of free and democratic nations. This remarkable event, following upon the elimination of apartheid and warmly greeted by the delegation of Senegal at that time, is surely the result of unwavering international solidarity; but it is also the culmination of common efforts made over decades by the two organizations to that end.

The national reconciliation recently achieved in Mozambique, in particular through the mediation of the OAU, as witnessed by the recent elections successfully held in that country under the aegis of the United Nations, as well as the important actions undertaken in Somalia, Angola, Liberia, Burundi and Rwanda in attempts to restore peace and security, can also be attributed to that cooperation.

Given these positive and encouraging facts, the cooperation between the United Nations and the OAU deserves to be intensified and broadened. It must put greater emphasis on the socio-economic field, in which

Africa is currently facing serious challenges. From this perspective, the delegation of Senegal is pleased to note that, in his report on this subject in document A/49/490, the Secretary-General offers increased opportunity for this cooperation by devoting greater attention to such priority fields as the economy, social and humanitarian issues and the environment. I hope that this approach will lead to concrete and important measures.

This wish is all the more justified by Africa's economic situation, which is beset by the increasing pauperization of certain social strata, a dearth of capital, serious indebtedness accompanied by a progressive decline in official development assistance, and a grave threat of famine or malnutrition to some 34 million inhabitants.

The Agenda for Peace, the OAU's mechanism for the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts in Africa, the Abuja Treaty establishing the African Economic Community, the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s and the Programme of Action of the recent International Conference on Population and Development — all are invaluable instruments which the United Nations and the OAU can apply to the further strengthening of their cooperation. Furthermore, we hope that the conclusions and recommendations anticipated from the world summits on women and social development will consolidate and widen this framework of cooperation.

The Agenda for Peace and the OAU mechanism for the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts in Africa offer an opportunity to encourage not only the decentralization of peace-keeping operations but also a greater involvement of the countries concerned in the process of settling conflict situations in their region in conformity with the provisions of Chapter VIII of the United Nations Charter.

To the advantages of rationalizing the rather limited financial means available to these two organizations, we should add the improved management of local political, social and cultural requirements, which often seem to be limiting factors on the efficiency of peace-keeping operations. The United Nations therefore has every reason to offer technical and financial assistance to the mechanism for the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts in Africa in order to make it more operational and effective. The interdependence between peace and development, now firmly established and acknowledged, has come to show that energetic action to promote the development of Africa is the best way to address the true causes of political and armed conflicts in the region.

Support for efforts to integrate the African economies and to implement Agenda 21 and the United Nations New Agenda, including a solution to the debt crisis, the relaunching of economic growth and the creation of a diversification fund for African commodities are all highly important potential directions for cooperation between the United Nations and the OAU. All these factors clearly demonstrate that this cooperation must go beyond its traditional theoretical framework and move resolutely towards the conception and implementation of concrete actions on behalf of Africa. In this way the United Nations can adequately fulfil its duty to create conditions for the emergence of a world of peace, security and prosperity for all, including for us Africans.

As the United Nations medium-term programme for 1992-1997 has determined Africa's economic recovery to be among the five identified global priorities, we must now translate these generous intentions into deeds through concrete action, particularly by the mobilization of additional and adequate resources.

In conclusion, the delegation of Senegal hopes that the draft resolution before us will be adopted without a vote and that, in time, its implementation will enjoy the unanimous support of the international community. We fully support the relevant statements made this morning by the representatives of Tunisia and Guinea, speaking on behalf of the Current Chairman of the OAU and the African Group of States, respectively.

Mr. Msengezi (Zimbabwe): Let me thank the Secretary-General for his report on cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity (OAU), contained in document A/49/490. My delegation fully associates itself with the statement made by the Permanent Representative of Tunisia on behalf of the Organization of African Unity on this subject.

Cooperation between the two organizations — the United Nations and the OAU — has increased vastly since it started nearly 30 years ago in 1965. We welcome the United Nations solid working relationship with the OAU in such areas as the decolonization of the African continent, the eradication of racial discrimination, racism and apartheid, assistance to refugees and the promotion of regional and subregional economic cooperation and integration among African countries. Indeed, all of the operational funds and programmes of the United Nations are undertaking valuable activities at the national and regional levels on the African continent

Just a few weeks ago, this Assembly held an important debate on strengthening the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations. Let me commend the Department of Humanitarian Affairs for coordinating rapid responses to the various sudden natural and man-made disasters in various parts of the African continent. We also appreciate the role the Department played in the preparation of the African Common Position for the World Conference on Natural Disaster Reduction, which was held in Yokohama, Japan, in May this year.

Zimbabwe is on record as having welcomed the proposal made by the Secretary-General in his report "An Agenda for Peace" relating to cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations in resolving conflicts, in peacemaking and in peace-building. As the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Zimbabwe, Mr. Nathan Shamuyarira, stated during the general debate in this Assembly on 11 October 1994,

> "efforts to promote peace, stability and security ... can largely be facilitated through regional organizations and good neighbours". (*Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-ninth Session, Plenary Meetings, 27th meeting, p. 8*).

To this end, in June 1993 Africa resolved to create a permanent mechanism of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) for the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts. Consequently, the OAU has been actively engaged in efforts to resolve the conflicts in Angola, Mozambique, Rwanda, Burundi, Somalia and Liberia. Indeed, it was in keeping with its commitment to regional arrangements that southern Africa took the initiative to resolve the constitutional crisis in Lesotho earlier this year. We count on the continued support of the United Nations, particularly in financial, logistical and material terms, to ensure that these regional arrangements are strengthened and sustainable. We welcome the interest in assisting the OAU in this endeavour shown so far by some Member States. It is our hope that these initiatives will be coordinated through the central organ of the OAU mechanism.

We recognize that regional arrangements should go beyond issues of peace and security alone. In this respect, Africa has committed itself to strategies designed to accelerate regional economic integration. Through regional economic integration organizations such as the Southern African Development Community (SADC), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Arab Maghreb Union, Africa is laying a foundation for its ultimate objective, namely, an African Economic Community. It is our hope that these efforts will continue to enjoy the tangible support of the international community and the United Nations.

Only yesterday this Assembly held a very important debate on the implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s. Zimbabwe remains convinced that the New Agenda provides the framework through which the United Nations system can support the efforts made by the African continent to make economic and social progress in the years ahead. We believe that the various bodies and organs of the United Nations, including operational funds and programmes, specialized agencies, the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa and other parts of the United Nations system, should cooperate closely with the Organization of African Unity in working towards the objectives of the New Agenda. We believe that if we are to achieve those objectives, the efforts of African countries need to be complemented substantially by the international community through, *inter alia*, increased official development assistance, direct foreign investment, a comprehensive solution to the continent's crushing debt burden, better commodity prices and improved market access. We believe that the question of the diversification of African economies, the need for which the United Nations has clearly recognized, will be given substantive treatment during this session of the General Assembly, particularly through an early agreement on the establishment of a diversification facility for Africa's commodities.

We have pointed out repeatedly in this Assembly that the United Nations has over the years adopted many international instruments on the question of development. Apart from the New Agenda for Africa which I have just referred to, we have such important instruments, as the International Development Strategy for the Fourth United Nations Development Decade, the Declaration of the eighteenth special session, Agenda 21 and the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, recently adopted in Cairo. We believe that it is the central task of the United Nations to galvanize international support for the objectives of these important instruments, particularly towards the eradication of poverty, creation of employment and the promotion of social integration. In this context, we continue to hope that the World Summit for Social Development, to be held in Copenhagen in March 1995, will take fully into account Africa's particular needs.

In conclusion, cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity should underscore the resolve of the African countries and the rest of the international community to rise above present obstacles and launch the continent on the path of economic recovery and development.

Mr. Mongbe (Benin) (*interpretation from French*): Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity (OAU), the subject of agenda item 32, should be easy enough to understand in the context of Chapter VIII of the Charter of this universal organization.

For that reason, many African delegations, including the delegation of Benin, had felt that the presentation of the item at a single meeting by the Chairman of the Group of African States and the current Chairman of the OAU, with supporting technical explanations by the Executive Secretary of the OAU's Mission at the United Nations, would suffice to obtain the consensus needed for the adoption of draft resolution A/49/L.43. But the long-standing reluctance of some delegations requires the delegation of Benin, which had the honour to take part in the unofficial consultations on this draft resolution, to make this statement.

Since 15 November 1965 there has been an agreement on cooperation between the OAU and the United Nations. This agreement was updated on 9 October 1990 by the Secretaries-General of the two organizations as a response to rapid developments both in Africa and at the international level.

Since 1988 resolutions have been adopted regularly by our Assembly — seven, to be precise — confirming the need for cooperation between the United Nations and the OAU. During the OAU Conference in Tunis from 6 to 11 June 1994, African Heads of State and Government, in recognition of the pivotal role now played by the United Nations on the international stage with the end of the cold war, reaffirmed their faith in this cooperation. They are fully convinced that new opportunities will open up for the United Nations to reach its fundamental objectives: the maintenance of international peace and security, the promotion of social progress with "better standards of life in larger freedom", the promotion of and respect for human rights.

It is in this spirit that each year the acting President of the Pan-African Organization or his representative has come to address the General Assembly. This year again, more specifically on 3 October, the Foreign Minister of Tunisia, representing the acting President of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), presented to the international community a description of the political, economic and social developments in Africa, taking care in so doing to call on the United Nations system to maintain and strengthen its cooperation with Africa.

Apartheid, which has been one of the most stubborn and hardy perennials on the agenda of the General Assembly, appearing year after year, is something that need hold our attention no longer. Indeed, efforts to eliminate this scourge have been crowned with success, with the emergence of a united, democratic and non-racial South Africa. Cooperation between the United Nations and the OAU has been of great assistance in bringing about this happy outcome.

The cold war is over, and the world is rejoicing and celebrating its end, which is marked by the breakup of ideologies and the perceptible reduction in the number of sterile debates. Nevertheless, there continue to exist sources of tension throughout the world and, in particular, in Africa. Noteworthy examples are the human tragedy being played out before the eyes of the world in Somalia, which, unfortunately, appears to be tiring or irritating world public opinion; the Rwandese tragedy, which took on such an inhuman aspect a few months ago; the fratricidal conflict in Liberia, where respect for cease-fire agreements and for reconciliation have been short-lived.

The persistence of conflicts of this kind is a serious obstacle to the economic recovery of the countries of the African continent, besides which it gives rise to displaced populations in search of supposed havens of peace and adequate food. That is why the Heads of State and Government of the OAU, at their Dakar Conference in July 1992, decided to create a mechanism for the prevention, management and settlement of conflicts throughout the continent.

That machinery was established in June 1993 at the Cairo Summit. It constitutes a source of hope for the safeguarding of peace throughout the continent, but given the meagre means available to African countries, support from the United Nations and its Member States is needed to strengthen the capacity of that machinery. The OAU needs assistance, for example, in the following fields: the creation of an early-warning system; the establishment of machinery for preventive diplomacy; the training of African personnel and contingents for peace-keeping

operations; and logistical and financial support for those operations.

Even before the establishment of such machinery, the Heads of State and Government reaffirmed their full support for the peace efforts being made by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) to restore peace to Liberia, and they strengthened the diplomatic means of the Pan-African Organization to bring about an acceptable outcome for the tragedy of Somalia. It is, then, not for lack of trying that they have not yet been able to put an end to these irrational situations.

My delegation once again expresses its appreciation to the Security Council and to each of its members for the efforts they have been making to deal with the problems of Somalia, Angola, Mozambique, Liberia, Rwanda and, of course, Western Sahara.

The unique capacity of the Security Council has been brought to bear in the following ways: in creating conditions for the conclusion of peace agreements and the settlement of the Angolan conflict; in leading the people of Mozambique to free and democratic elections under international control; in strengthening the measures it had decided upon to ensure the delivery of food assistance in Somalia; and in imposing an embargo on arms and military *matériel* in the Liberian conflict. All these are acts that enhance the good name and image of the United Nations in Africa.

For about five years, qualitative changes have been taking place on the African political scene. The thirst for freedom and the ardent desire of the African people fully to enjoy their fundamental rights have led to great upheavals marked by the clash of political cultures on the path to democratization. Thus it has been that several countries of the continent have committed themselves to the process of democratization, aimed at promoting the effective participation of all segments of the population in the development process and the management of public affairs.

In most cases, this process has encountered — indeed, is still encountering — setbacks, which have led to disorders and delays in economic and social advancement. My delegation therefore believes that increased assistance from the United Nations should be given to countries requesting it in order to increase the chances of success for the democratization process in those countries, and in order to organize pluralistic, free and fair elections.

One of those areas in which cooperation between the United Nations and the OAU is most urgent and indeed indispensable is cooperation for the recovery and economic development of Africa.

The General Assembly, at its forty-eighth session, stressed the urgent need to intensify international cooperation in order to bring about a lasting solution to the problem of the external debt of the developing countries, which dangerously jeopardizes their development.

As regards the particular case of Africa, the measures envisaged in the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s must be implemented by the international community.

My delegation, like the other African delegations, is very much concerned at the fact that three years after its adoption, the New Agenda would still appear to be at the stage of taking its first few hesitant steps. It looks very much as if it will encounter the same failure as did its predecessor, the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development, as was stated yesterday. We hope that concrete measures will be taken adequately to inform the various partners in Africa's progress that they must contribute, without reserve, to the implementation of General Assembly decisions regarding the implementation of the New Agenda. To that end, invitations to take part in this endeavour must also be extended to Governments, the organs, the Programmes and the Funds of the United Nations and to intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to make the contributions expected of them. The Tokyo Conference on Africa's economic problems, which was held in 1993, is very much part of this effort and should be viewed as an action to mobilize resources, thus permitting the Government of Japan to orient its assistance to the priorities that have been identified in the New Agenda.

My delegation particularly supports the idea that the Secretary-General of the United Nations should invite the representative of the Secretary-General of the OAU to participate in the meetings of all bodies, commissions, committees and working groups of the United Nations dealing with the follow-up, control and evaluation of the New Agenda.

In this connection, we would express the hope that the arrangement responsible for following up the New Agenda in the Secretariat of the United Nations — the

Office of the Special Commissioner for Africa and the Least Developed Countries (OSCAL) — should be strengthened in terms of human, financial and material resources if it is to carry out more effectively the task entrusted to it.

It should be recalled that one of the concerns of the Heads of State and Government of Africa is to strengthen cooperation between the OAU and the United Nations within the framework of the creation of the African Economic Community.

They invite international organizations, financing agencies, other institutions within the United Nations system and non-governmental organizations to support economic cooperation and integration programmes that come within the framework of the priorities set out by the subregional economic communities.

The delegation of Benin welcomes the financial contribution made by the United Nations Development Programme to the Organization of African Unity for the creation of the machinery set forth in the Treaty establishing the African Economic Community.

We support the idea set forth in the draft resolution under consideration to call on the relevant organs of the United Nations to ensure

> "the effective, fair and equitable representation of Africa" *(A/49/L.43, para. 23)*

at various levels within the United Nations system.

At the end of the twentieth century and on the threshold of the third millennium, Africa remains a continent which is, at best, not very well known and, at worst, unknown and even ignored. My delegation would therefore highlight operative paragraph 21 of the draft resolution before us and would like to reiterate, in different terms, what we stated in the Fourth and Fifth Committees of the General Assembly: international public opinion must be alerted to the situation in Africa, in terms of both political progress and of economic and social problems.

In conclusion, may I express the hope that a proper understanding of our situation by all delegations in our Assembly will take the form of the adoption by consensus of draft resolution A/49/L.43, which sums up the aspirations of the peoples of Africa and expresses the wishes of their leaders.

Mr. Eteffa (Ethiopia): As one of the founding States of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the permanent seat of its headquarters, Ethiopia is pleased to participate in the deliberations of the General Assembly on the important issue of cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity. In this regard, we would like to express our appreciation to the Secretary-General for his informative and valuable report, and pledge our strong support for his endeavours to further enhance the cooperation of the two organizations.

The report (A/49/490) before us demonstrates that the areas of cooperation between the United Nations and the OAU have been further expanded and strengthened over the past years. We note that the OAU and the various technical and development agencies of the United Nations have increased their close contacts and consultations. Since both the Organization of African Unity and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa are located in Addis Ababa, the two organizations have been working hand in hand.

These positive developments not only testify to the commitment of the two organizations to work together but also show concretely their desire to expand their fields of cooperation and strengthen the existing ones. We welcome this constructive spirit, and we believe that there is great potential for further strengthened cooperation between the two organizations within the framework of their charters. Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations makes the cooperation that should exist between the United Nations and regional organizations very clear. For the United Nations, decentralizing some of its activities in coordination with regional organizations could be more effective and less costly. In this respect, we welcome the adoption of the Declaration on the Enhancement of Cooperation between the United Nations and Regional Arrangements or Agencies in the Maintenance of International Peace and Security.

The exchange of experience and information in technical and development areas and the provision of financial assistance to various projects are the major aspects of cooperation that need to be further strengthened. The promotion of economic, social and cultural rights must be addressed within the framework of such cooperation.

With the end of the cold war, novel regional approaches to prevent disputes from escalating into

conflicts have been devised and set in motion. With regard to our region, it was in June 1991 that the Organization of African Unity established a new mechanism for the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts, with a view to addressing issues concerning peace, stability and security on the continent. Conflict resolution is one of the top priorities in Africa and should receive the full assistance of the international community. The mechanism for the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts in Africa should be staffed by competent, committed and visionary individuals for the successful accomplishment of its enormous task.

We believe that this initiative is not only an important step in the right direction, but also supplements the role of the United Nations in the maintenance of global peace and security by way of contributing to the reduction of its overextended peace-keeping operations. Although significant steps have been taken by the OAU in the area of peacemaking and peace-keeping during the past years, conflicts have persisted in many parts of our region. The resolution of conflicts in Africa has been slow, partly because the challenges that the organization is facing are far greater than the means and resources available to it to respond urgently and effectively. We would therefore call upon the United Nations to provide assistance to the OAU to further strengthen its peacemaking, peace-keeping and humanitarian intervention capabilities.

While the process of peacemaking, reconciliation and peace-keeping operations should have genuine global characteristics, the countries of the region could make positive contributions by responding in a timely and cost-effective manner, given the necessary resources, strict coordination, proper orientation, training and commitment.

Conflict prevention, management and resolution involves a subtle and delicate handling of the issues and parties concerned. Negotiations to reach a political settlement and reconciliation as well as other efforts to resolve conflicts peacefully require, among other things, a knowledge of the historical background of the conflicts, the cultural and linguistic sensibilities of the people, their relationships with neighbouring peoples and States and the whole social, cultural and economic context of the situation.

The active support and involvement of the United Nations and its specialized agencies, which, in relative terms, possess the much-needed resources and experience in such vital areas of environment, population and socio-economic development will be crucial for Africa. In this respect, particular emphasis must be placed on strengthening the OAU's capabilities to create a solid foundation for the region's economic growth and sustainable development.

Africa's efforts to moderate its rapid population growth, the implementation of the Tunis declaration and resolution on population and development and the preparation of the Treaty and protocols for the establishment of the African Economic Community and for its ultimate realization require the active and unreserved support of the United Nations.

Africa is also a priority region for environmental and socio-economic assistance, particularly in such areas as the reduction of drought and desertification, maternal and infant mortality and morbidity, the eradication of illiteracy, the repatriation of refugees and humanitarian activities to help famine victims, returnees and internally displaced persons.

Since democratization is also important for the achievement of peace and stability, as well as for social and economic progress, we urge the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity to work together in support of the ongoing democratization processes in Africa.

I should like to reiterate once again Ethiopia's conviction that the activities of the United Nations and those of the Organization of African Unity in the fields of peacemaking, peace-keeping and development are mutually reinforcing and complementary. Therefore, enhanced cooperation on the basis of effective partnership in the maintenance of global peace and security, as well as in human-centred sustainable growth and development, is important.

Unless we critically examine the functions of the United Nations, there can hardly be improvements. If we care — as we do — we should look critically at the activities and actions of the Organization. There is no doubt that it could be more effective and more economical and, thereby, make a greater impact. A positive impact is what the international community is looking for. The existing discrepancy between actions and paper-oriented activities is a matter of concern to my delegation.

The activities category includes declarations, resolutions, decisions, papers and non-papers. Unless these activities are followed by concrete actions their

impact on the lives of people will be questionable. In the category of actions are the effective delivery of humanitarian assistance, effective peace-keeping operations and peacemaking and peace-building efforts, as well as undertakings aimed at contributing to socio-economic progress and poverty alleviation. It seems to be common knowledge that, so far, paper-oriented activities have had a greater share — an unduly large share — in the work of the United Nations. In future, the scales should tilt in favour of actions. Action-oriented cooperation should go beyond piles and piles of documents — the heaps of paper that have negative implications for the environment rather than practical significance.

This is why my delegation is calling for cooperation and partnership characterized by actions that will make a positive and durable impact on the lives of ordinary men and women in Africa. It is in this spirit that Ethiopia is one of the sponsors of the draft resolution before the Assembly. We hope that it will be adopted unanimously.

Mr. Rudolph (Germany): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union, and Austria supports this statement.

In the year that has passed since we last debated this issue in the United Nations General Assembly there has been a growing awareness of the crucial role that regional organizations can play in meeting the huge economic, ecological, social and security challenges that we face today. Being physically closer to the problems at hand, regional organizations have in the recent past shown their ability to obtain easier access, to recognize the needs faster and to display greater flexibility than can those parts of the international community that have not been directly affected. This is the very concept behind Article 52 of the United Nations Charter. The Organization of African Unity (OAU) is a case in point, as it has amply demonstrated with its recent commitments.

Africa, as a neighbouring continent, is of special importance and interest to us. At the same time, we are well aware of the concern of African leaders that their continent might be marginalized. I should like to take this opportunity to emphasize once more that this will not happen. The European Union has on several occasions been made aware that developments, both positive and negative, that take place in Africa are of direct relevance to our own countries. None of us can master on his own the global tasks confronting us.

The European Union is therefore ready to encourage regional cooperation and integration in Africa and to strengthen its ties with the OAU and the subregional organizations of the continent, such as the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the Inter-Governmental Authority on Drought and Development (IGADD). The ministerial conference between the European Union and SADC that took place in Berlin this September represents an important step forward in the development of such links.

In the past year we have seen many important developments on the African continent — some of them very positive; others tragic and disturbing.

With the holding of democratic elections in South Africa and the formation of a new Government under the leadership of President Nelson Mandela, one of the great aims of the OAU and of all of us in the United Nations family has been achieved: the abolition of apartheid and the rise of a truly democratic society in South Africa. It is our strong hope that the new South Africa will act as an example of reconciliation between former adversaries and as a force for stability and economic development in the region.

The European Union notes with satisfaction that, following the first multiparty presidential and parliamentary elections in Mozambique, which took place from 27 to 29 October 1994, President Chissano was inaugurated on 9 December. The elections, for which the European Union contributed 200 observers, can be called a success. In this respect, we should like to commend the role of the United Nations Operation in Mozambique — in particular, that of the United Nations Secretary-General's Special Representative in Maputo, Mr. Aldo Ajello — in the Mozambican peace process.

On 20 November the Angolan Government and UNITA signed a peace Agreement in Lusaka. The European Union welcomes this important step towards lasting peace in Angola. The European Union notes with satisfaction that the Security Council welcomed the United Nations Secretary-General's decision to proceed with restoration of the strength of the United Nations Angola Verification Mission — the actual enlargement being dependent on an effective cease-fire. We urge Angola's parties to respect the Lusaka Protocol and to abide fully by the terms of the cease-fire. The European Union is prepared to cooperate closely with the Angolan Government in the reconstruction of the country's economy after 19 years of devastating civil war.

We recall our support for the settlement plan for the holding of a referendum on self-determination for the people of Western Sahara, organized by the United Nations in cooperation with the Organization of African Unity (OAU). We renew our appeal to both parties to cooperate fully with the Secretary-General and the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO).

The recent genocide in Rwanda claimed the lives of hundreds of thousands of people. Even after the installation of a new Government in Kigali, the neighbouring countries and the international community continue to bear the burden of 2 million refugees. In this respect, we are concerned about the deteriorating situation in the refugee camps in the neighbouring countries. We hope that further steps will be taken as a matter of urgency to address this problem.

The rehabilitation and reconstruction of that devastated country, as well as the return and reintegration of millions of refugees and internally displaced persons, are enormous tasks that require great efforts and close cooperation between the international community, regional bodies, the neighbouring countries and the people of Rwanda. The same goes for the long process of lasting reconciliation and for the need of bringing to trial those responsible for the horrendous massacres. In this respect, we welcome the recent establishment of an International Tribunal for Rwanda by the Security Council.

The European Union continues to provide humanitarian assistance to displaced persons and refugees inside and outside Rwanda, is ready to provide rehabilitation assistance and is prepared to resume, under certain conditions, its structural development assistance to Rwanda. In that framework, the European Union Council of Ministers recommended on 25 November an immediate rehabilitation action programme, worth 67 million European currency units, for social structures and other productive structures in Rwanda. In addition, the European Union is supporting the deployment of human rights observers to the area through contributions in the form of financial support, material and personnel.

The European Union applauds the cooperation between most of the parties in Burundi, where the election of a new President and the formation of a new Government constitute important steps towards a democratic solution to the grave crisis which began a year ago. We commend the positive role the OAU and the United Nations Special Representative have played in this development as an encouraging demonstration of the capabilities of those two organizations in the field of preventive diplomacy. Nevertheless, there continue to be many violations of human rights in Burundi, and the situation remains fragile.

In the case of Somalia, unfortunately, the work undertaken by both the United Nations and the OAU has not yet led to any progress towards national reconciliation. All efforts to convene a national reconciliation conference with the participation of all warring factions have so far failed. The factions, through their lack of cooperation with the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and with the United Nations, must bear full responsibility for this failure. Under these circumstances, the Security Council has seen no justification for extending the mandate of the United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM) beyond the date originally envisaged for the end of the Mission, the end of March 1995. The European Union hopes, however, that both the United Nations and the OAU will continue to assist the people of Somalia in their search for a viable and acceptable peace and calls upon the warring factions to abide fully by their earlier commitments in this respect.

In Liberia, similarly, the peace-keeping and mediation efforts by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the United Nations, which we commend, have not yet brought about an end to the fighting. The European Union encourages ECOWAS and the United Nations to continue their efforts to bring about a peaceful solution to this conflict.

The vast majority of the troop contributors to the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR) are African countries, and the ECOWAS Military Observer Group (ECOMOG) in Liberia is an African initiative. These missions demonstrate that African countries have the political will to bear their share of the conflict-solving and peace-keeping burden on their continent. The difficulties both missions have encountered also make it clear, however, that the problems posed by the lack of resources available to most African troop contributors remain to be solved.

What is needed is a broad-based concept for conflict resolution and peace-keeping that takes into account the particular strengths and weaknesses of the various countries and institutions involved. An institutional framework for this task could include an early warning mechanism, a system of effective mediation in the early

stages before the outbreak of a conflict and logistical preparations for a speedy response if an armed conflict arises. This could include improved training for peace-keeping forces and assistance to enable their rapid deployment. The European Union recognizes the urgency of this problem, and several Member States are currently elaborating ideas to this end.

The European Union has followed with great attention the development of the mechanism for conflict prevention, management and resolution in Africa, created by the OAU. We have witnessed the emergence of a political instrument that has begun to play a significant role and deserves encouragement and support from the international community. In the framework of our growing cooperation, the European Union is currently studying the possibility of further assistance to the OAU in this field.

We are looking forward to intensive discussions with our partners in the OAU on the joint steps we could take in order to be better prepared to respond to crises in the future. A meeting of senior officials representing the European Union and the OAU took place in Brussels on 1 December 1994 in order to work out a framework for closer cooperation. It was decided to institutionalize the dialogue by holding meetings between our two organizations on a regular basis.

Africa continues to face serious economic problems. Insufficient development of the private sector, high population growth and internal conflicts are some of the problems to be addressed in revitalizing growth and sustainable development on the continent. Without sustainable economic growth, the basic needs of Africa's population cannot be met, and prospects for lasting stability in the region will not be very promising.

Our cooperation with Africa is therefore not limited to security questions in the narrow sense of the word. The European Union strongly supports efforts for economic reform in African countries. The traditional cooperation of the European Union with many African countries under the Lomé IV agreement is the cornerstone of our efforts in this respect. This model, which has proved itself valid in the last few decades, links instruments of the trade sphere and the development sphere uniquely and efficiently. As proof of our long-term commitment, Lomé IV has been concluded for a period of 10 years' effectiveness instead of the usual five. Under the National Indicative Programmes, about 4.1 billion European currency units are being disbursed to African countries in the first five years of the agreement. In the area of trade and diversification, substantial financial assistance is given under the system of stabilization of export earnings (STABEX) and the system for stabilizing export earnings in the mining sector (SYSMIN) mechanisms.

The planned mid-term review of the current Lomé agreement began with a conference of African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) and European Community Ministers in Swaziland in May this year. Together with our partners in Africa we will try to improve further the effectiveness of our cooperation.

In its development policy towards Africa, the European Union will cooperate closely with the United Nations. We strongly support the Secretary-General's initiative of complementing "An Agenda for Peace" with "An Agenda for Development".

I am confident that all our common efforts will help to bring about a better and prosperous future for a continent that has suffered a great deal.

The President: In accordance with General Assembly resolution 2011 (XX), of 11 October 1965, I now call on the Observer of the Organization of African Unity.

Mr. Sy (Organization of African Unity) (*interpretation from French*): Allow me first of all to endorse the statement made earlier by the representative of Tunisia speaking as representative of the current Chairman of the Organization of African Unity (OAU).

I should also like to endorse the statement made by the representative of Guinea speaking as Chairman of the Group of African States.

The cooperation between the Organization of African Unity and the United Nations, which began some 30 years ago, has grown and flourished over the years and has achieved such notable successes as the liberation of territories under colonial domination and the defeat of the policy of apartheid in South Africa.

Today, we rejoice to see the first delegation of a free and democratic South Africa seated with us and thus regaining its place in the community of nations.

In this connection, the OAU and the United Nations have worked in close cooperation, particularly during the preparations for the first democratic election in South Africa. Similarly, we have worked together in preparing

for the elections in Mozambique that were the culmination of the peace process in that country. Those successes show the potentials of the cooperation between the OAU and the United Nations and encourage us to deal with renewed strength with the conflicts and wars that are ravaging several regions of the African continent.

Indeed, those conflicts are an important obstacle to the emergence of a political and social environment conducive to economic development and democracy. Without that peaceful environment, cooperation between the United Nations and the OAU — in spite of all its potentials and its successes in certain areas, particularly agriculture, health, education, the struggle against desertification, child protection and technical assistance — could very well end up yielding only meagre and short-term results.

Hence, it is imperative that cooperation between our two organizations become a powerful stimulus to the ongoing efforts being made by the Organization of African Unity to promote an environment of peace and economic progress thanks, *inter alia*, to the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts. In this connection, the United Nations and the OAU must work out new methods, approaches and procedures that can enable them together to deal with present conflicts and prevent future ones. That is the challenge inherent in OAU-United Nations cooperation today.

For the conflicts that are now devastating many African countries have already given rise to many serious humanitarian crises, considerably increased the number of refugees and displaced persons, led to massive violations of human rights and posed many threats to international peace and security. Those conflicts, some of which go back to the colonial area, have various origins. Some are only the latest results of the "divide and rule" policies of the former colonial Powers. Others are the results of the cold-war policies of military support for non-democratic Governments and for groups that do not respect human rights. Finally, some conflicts are the outcome of the ill-advised policies pursued by certain Governments and of ethnic rivalries fuelled and aggravated by worsening living conditions and the economic crisis that has been ravaging the continent since the 1980s.

Such conflicts are of major concern to African countries, which are always the first to suffer their effects in the form of massive flows of refugees and increased insecurity. This is also why, whenever a conflict has broken out, African countries have attempted, either with the help of neighbouring countries or with that of the OAU, to contain it and find a peaceful, African, solution to it. Unfortunately, the complex nature of such conflicts and the broad means required to settle them are often beyond the limited resources of African countries. Thus, in Liberia the countries members of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), faced with the international community's immobility, agreed to send and have maintained a peace-keeping force there since 1990, notwithstanding the heavy burden such an undertaking places on their economies. The experience of the Military Observer Group of ECOWAS (ECOMOG) thus attests to the will of the African countries to make sacrifices in order to resolve conflicts in their region, just as it illustrates how important it is for the international community to demonstrate its readiness to support the initiatives of African regional and subregional organizations, provide trained personnel and furnish the necessary technical, logistical and financial assistance to facilitate and speed up the success of the operation.

Unfortunately, this lesson has only recently begun to be understood. None the less, the international community, responding to the conflicts that have broken out or worsened parallel to the Liberian crisis, has dispatched several peace-keeping forces, which, like the United Nations Operation in Mozambique (ONUMOZ), have often performed remarkably. The OAU fully appreciates the actions of the international community and hopes that such actions will be taken everywhere, until the goal of peace has been attained, particularly in Liberia, in Somalia, in Angola and in Rwanda. The OAU particularly welcomes the role played by the Secretary-General of the United Nations in getting the message out to the international community and in United Nations initiatives to help settle these conflicts in Africa.

Recently, however, a trend towards disengagement has begun to emerge in the international community, particularly among certain influential members of the Security Council. The result has been that the United Nations has sometimes failed to act in a timely or satisfactory manner, thus leading to a worsening of the conflict and an increase in the number of casualties.

Although the desire to control the spiralling costs of the United Nations conflict-settlement activities is understandable, it should not lead to selective intervention or to the use of a double standard. Not only would such a development prevent the United Nations from properly fulfilling its responsibilities for the maintenance of international peace and security, but it would also and above all undermine the Security Council's credibility

which it has regained with so much difficulty after decades of semi-impotence, and, worse, impugn its moral authority.

One of the principal arguments used to advocate the withdrawal of United Nations forces from certain conflicts is the lack of progress towards national conciliation. This situation is, of course, highly disturbing, particularly for the OAU. It should not, however, lead to such radical solutions as an outright withdrawal of forces but rather to a re-examination of the approach taken and the goals pursued. Such a re-examination would certainly help demonstrate that an earlier intervention giving greater leeway to preventive diplomacy and based more on regional organizations would be less costly and more effective. Similarly, it would show the importance of a better balance between means and ends, of a balanced mandate taking into account the protection of civilians, the delivery of humanitarian aid, the cessation of hostilities and the restoration and consolidation of peace.

Lastly, it could lead to a broader consideration of the potentials inherent in regional organizations, whose cooperative relationship with the United Nations in conflict settlement is still poorly defined.

The present difficulties being encountered by peace-keeping operations, particularly in achieving their goals, and their exorbitant cost are not confined to those operations being carried out in Africa. They are due to the fact that the problems with which they must deal are new and complex and to the presence of protagonists against whom the international community has but limited means of action. Such challenges, which are not insurmountable, should not lead to the suspension of a peace-keeping operation, which could create a situation leading to another serious humanitarian crisis. The Organization of African Unity is deeply concerned by these new trends towards disengagement. Indeed, in June 1933 the OAU, which has made conflict settlement in Africa one of its very highest priorities, established a mechanism for the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts in Africa.

This mechanism, the prime objectives of which are to anticipate and to prevent conflicts, will stress measures to restore and consolidate peace. However, if a conflict requires a peace-keeping operation, the OAU will call on the United Nations, which has greater experience in this area and greater resources. The mechanism is already in effect. Its central organ functions at three levels: that of heads of State and Government, that of foreign ministers and that of ambassadors. A special fund to finance OAU activities in conflict settlement has been established. Lastly, the secretariat of the OAU now has new structures designed to give the central organ the necessary technical support.

The mechanism, which gives form to the determination of African countries to address conflict situations in a resolute manner, has already undertaken several important initiatives in respect of Burundi, Rwanda, Liberia and Somalia. Its action has however been somewhat hampered by its meagre experience and the inadequacy of available resources. In this connection, we note with satisfaction that several donors, both African and non-African, have made significant contributions to the OAU peace fund. These contributions, which are intended to finance specific activities or pay for equipment or *matériel* for specific operations, will certainly facilitate OAU action in conflict settlement, but we should emphasize that the restrictions attached to some of these contributions — restrictions which the OAU can appreciate — do not always lead to the flexibility and speed required by crisis situations. In any case, available resources fall far short of needs. An appeal must be made to the international community to make a generous contribution to the OAU peace fund in order to allow our Organization to respond effectively and swiftly to conflict situations on the continent.

Over the past 12 months, the OAU and the United Nations have cooperated in settling several conflicts in Africa, in particular in South Africa, Angola, Mozambique, Burundi, Rwanda, Somalia and Liberia. In this connection, we welcome the signing of the peace agreement in Angola on 19 November 1994 and the respect of the parties for the cease-fire. After 19 years of war, the courageous people of that country should be able to enjoy real peace.

In Western Sahara, in conformity with the United Nations/OAU settlement plan, our Organization has sent four observers to participate in the work of the Identification Commission to identify voters entitled to participate in the referendum on self-determination. The OAU, as was emphasized by Dr. Salim Ahmed Salim, the Secretary-General of our organization, attributes great importance to a peaceful and lasting settlement of the question of Western Sahara through the holding of a free, fair and impartial referendum, in accordance with the settlement plan.

In Liberia, the OAU is participating, in close cooperation with the United Nations and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), in

efforts to restore peace through the actions of its Eminent Person for Liberia, Dr. Canaan Banana. The OAU has thus been closely associated with efforts leading to the Cotonou Peace Agreement. The Secretary-General of our organization has undertaken a number of actions to facilitate the deployment of additional African contingents to support the Cease-fire Monitoring Group of ECOWAS (ECOMOG).

Although difficulties remain in the implementation of the Cotonou Agreement, consultations are being actively pursued with a view to overcoming them. It is therefore important for the United Nations Mission in Liberia, whose role will be crucial in the implementation of certain provisions of the Peace Agreement, to continue to be present and to support the peace process. It is also essential for the special Trust Fund for Liberia to receive the contributions necessary for the proper continuation of the ECOMOG peace mission.

In Burundi, ever since the crisis erupted in October 1993, the OAU has followed the situation very closely. The central organ of the OAU mechanism for the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts decided, at the request of the Burundi authorities, to send a protection and monitoring mission to restore confidence in Burundi, the civilian and military components of which are now in the field. This mission, led by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General of the OAU in close cooperation with the Special Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, has contributed to stabilizing the situation. The conclusion of the governmental agreement and the election of a new president of the Republic are important steps in the process of national reconciliation. The international community must, however, continue to follow the situation in Burundi very closely, given the regional environment, and to support the authorities of that country in their task of national reconciliation and reconstruction. The OAU, which has decided to hold a regional conference on assistance to refugees early next year, has already begun its preparations in close cooperation with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the United Nations.

Turning now to the situation in Somalia, it must unfortunately be noted that the United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM II) must withdraw its military contingent in March 1995, despite the fact that the process of national reconciliation has made very little progress and that the country still has no government. In this connection, it should be noted that cooperation between the OAU and the United Nations in that country has not always realized its potential, though it got off to a good start. The United Nations had initiated several joint mediation missions with the OAU, the League of Arab States and the Organization of the Islamic Conference with the aim of achieving a cease-fire in Mogadishu and the success of the conference on national reconciliation held in Addis Ababa in March 1993.

However, with the transfer of the operations of the unified intervention force of UNOSOM II, stress will be laid on establishing conditions of security throughout Somalia, the consequence of which should be a reduction of joint initiatives with regional organizations. Today, as the military contingent of UNOSOM II is preparing to leave, it is perhaps time to return to a process of more consistent consultation and better coordinated action.

Nothing illustrates better the importance of improved coordination between the United Nations and the OAU than the tragedy of Rwanda, particularly from 1990 to 1993, when it was necessary to end the civil war, organize peace negotiations and monitor the cease-fire. The OAU, which sponsored the negotiations, kept the United Nations closely involved in the discussions that were to lead to the Arusha Peace Agreement in August 1993. This coordination facilitated the replacement of the OAU observers by the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR) when the observers left in October 1993. From November 1993 to April 1994, when the implementation of the Arusha Agreement was deadlocked, the OAU and the United Nations took steps to promote its resumption.

However, following the events of 7 April 1994 and the deterioration of the situation, the Security Council decided to reduce UNAMIR's strength, despite the OAU's objection. This did not help to stabilize the situation. With the adoption of Security Council resolution 918 (1994), the United Nations was to authorize an increase in UNAMIR's personnel to 5,500 men. Faced with difficulties in obtaining troops and equipment for such a force, the Secretary-General of the OAU engaged in consultations which led, in June 1994, to the commitment of 14 African countries to supplying troops. Unfortunately, the equipment was not available and UNAMIR II was deployed only four months later. In the meantime, about 500,000 people were killed and millions of refugees poured into neighbouring countries, sowing the seeds of further tensions in the subregion.

It is clear from all this that concrete measures must be taken to remedy the obvious shortcomings in OAU/United Nations cooperation in the settlement of conflicts, especially when swift action is required. In this regard, it is important at the outset to acknowledge the United Nations primary responsibility in the maintenance of international peace and security and to recognize that such responsibility cannot be transferred to a regional organization on the pretext that the conflict is taking place in its geographical area. It is desirable, however, in the spirit of Chapter VIII of the United Nations Charter, that the Organization actively seek the cooperation of regional organizations and agree with them on concrete modalities for cooperation and collaboration.

Regional organizations can usefully assist the United Nations in promoting political support from the countries of the region and encouraging them to provide troops for United Nations peace-keeping forces. Similarly, regional organizations, when they have the logistics and the financial resources, could take over from the United Nations. But, for the time being, this is not possible for most of them. The United Nations must therefore study further ways and means of assisting regional organizations and strengthening their conflict prevention and settlement capacities.

It is also important to stress the need to find better procedures for consultations and coordination between the United Nations and the OAU. Consultations should be more systematic and the Security Council must find a way to receive information from the regional organization concerned before it takes any decision.

Turning now to the restoration of peace, the joint missions that have taken place in the past must be renewed whenever conditions are right.

The solution to the conflicts at present ravaging Africa require preventive diplomacy and the restoration and maintenance of peace. However, prevention will require firm action to remedy the underlying economic causes. That is why African countries very early on initiated a process of economic cooperation and integration, the culmination of which was the entry into force, on 12 May 1994, of the Treaty establishing the African Economic Community. The Treaty is designed gradually to implement an integrated economic area covering 700 million people and should enable Africa to win its rightful place as a fully fledged partner in the global economy and it deserves the support of the international community.

In this regard, the United Nations system should also continue to support the existing subregional communities and their integration programmes, the strengthening of which would mark a first step in the implementation of the African Economic Community. Help must also be provided to implement strategic development and integration plans in the various sectors identified by the Treaty establishing the Community. These programmes and strategies are indispensable operational instruments to enable the Community to function.

Appropriate technical assistance to the OAU and its technical institutions would be appropriate during the initial stage of the Community. Many such requests have been taken up by United Nations institutions. But, such support should be better coordinated and given priority treatment in the United Nations system. Similarly, United Nations bodies working in Africa should include, at the regional and subregional level, activities which will promote regional cooperation in their respective areas and which will help attain the objectives of the African Economic Community.

The African Economic Community will certainly take its first steps more easily if the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s were to be put into effect. Unfortunately, three years after the adoption of that Agenda we have learned, in the most recent joint report of the Committee for Programme and Coordination and Administrative Committee on Coordination (CPC/ACC), that Africa is the only region of the world where poverty will increase in the 1990s. If present trends were to continue, then the number of people in Africa living in a state of abject poverty, a figure of 216 million in 1990, will rise to 304 million between now and the year 2000.

The lack of support for the New Agenda from certain donors is even harder to understand since the report of the Economic Commission for Africa of 1993 said that only 17 out of 52 African countries have reached the annual growth rate of 6 per cent set by the New Agenda. This means that more African countries would have attained this objective if there had been broader or more global support for the programme.

Efforts by Africa to implement the New Agenda must meet with a more positive attitude from the international community. Otherwise, this programme, which gave rise to such high expectations in Africa, will meet the same fate as its predecessor, the Programme of

Action for African Economic Recovery and Development. In this context, the United Nations Secretariat structures responsible for the implementation of the New Agenda must be strengthened in order to generate greater resources and give it more visibility.

My delegation welcomes the signing of the International Convention on Desertification. Similarly, it is our hope that the forthcoming World Summit for Social Development will provide specific answers to such burning problems as those regarding unemployment, poverty and health in Africa and give priority to Africa.

To conclude, as the Current Chairman of the African Group of States has already done, I appeal to all delegations to support draft resolution A/49/L.43 which, we hope, will be adopted by consensus.

The President: We have heard the last speaker in the debate on this item.

The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/48/L.43. The draft resolution on this item last year was adopted without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/49/L.43?

Draft resolution A/49/L.43 was adopted (resolution 49/64).

The President: Before calling on speakers who wish to explain their positions, may I remind delegations that such explanations are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. Gelber (United States of America): The United States is pleased to be able to join the consensus on draft resolution A/49/L.43. The record of cooperation between the United States and the Organization of African Unity shows a significant community of interest. To enlarge upon this cooperation is an objective of my Government and is being pursued energetically.

Nevertheless, there are two points we would like to make about draft resolution A/49/L.43. First, and with regard to paragraph 18, we note that the Secretary-General's report on the New Agenda brings attention to many development problems existing in African countries. The United States would have preferred it if a number of factors other than just debt relief, resource availability and the diversification of the economies of African countries had been mentioned there, in particular the importance of free markets and good governance. Secondly, the United States wishes to note that nothing in this draft resolution should be seen as prejudicing the outcome of negotiations at this year's session of the General Assembly on the draft resolution on the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s. These negotiations are still under way.

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 32?

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 1.20 p.m.